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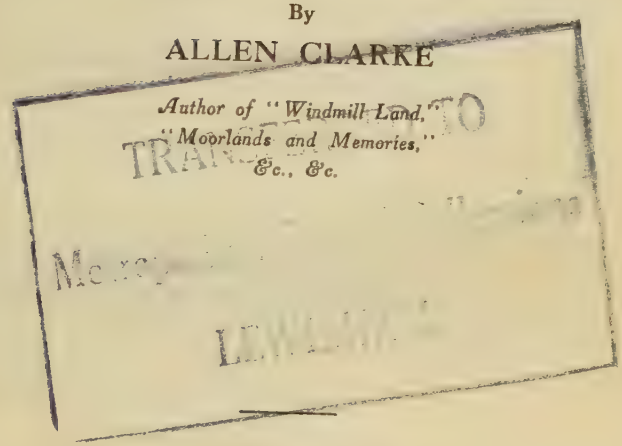
THE Story of Blackpool

By

ALLEN CLARKE

Author of "Windmill Land," "Moorlands and Memories," &c., &c.



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TO MY CHILDREN AND THEIR HOME-TOWN.

WOOLWICH
PUBLIC

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INTRODUCTORY.

The idea of telling this Story of Blackpool in the particular way I am going to tell it happened to me when my little daughter, on her twelfth birthday, was asking some questions which could only be answered by relating some records of the town's growth and changes. I decided to write a History of Blackpool, but it must be in such a style that the average child, as well as the adult, would like it as well as a tale. History as a rule is a skeleton affair, a bogey of lessons in a dismal dress of dreary statements decked with strings of dates. So I thought I would try to make the dry bones live by telling the history in a different way. I trusted that my fairy godmother, who gave me some Gift of Imagination, which is helpful in mental reconstruction of the Past, would assist happily. My notion was to tell the story so as to make the young feel just old enough to realise the pleasures of knowledge and the old to feel young enough to respond to the romance that charms the inquiring and exploring soul of the juvenile. If I can only manage that double aim, to make the young feel as learned as the old and the old as fresh as the young, I shall think myself as lucky as the football team that gets a winning goal. In that event, especially if in reading this story the old feel that they are renewing their youth, and are as merry as schoolchildren once again, this narrative will turn out to be rather a magic sort of history, won't it?

Perhaps it is possible.

Anyhow, let's hope and do our best.

WOOLWICH PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

I.

BACK THROUGH THE GENERATIONS AND AGES.

If you go out of the house, down the street, to the promenade, you will see other houses arranged in streets. You will see shops and other buildings. You will see the tall Tower, its peak right up in the sky, and the Big Wheel. You will also see the three piers stretching into the sea. You will see hotels, churches, theatres, picture houses, tram-lined roads, railway stations, a Town Hall, a library and art gallery, an electricity works, a gas works, motor-car garages, a police station, a lifeboat house, a fine-engine station, hospitals, banks, and other structures, as well as cricket and football fields and bowling greens. There seems to be no end to the streets and buildings. But if you walk on and on, north, south, or east, you find the streets thin away, leaving only highways into the farmlands, and if you look behind you you will see all the streets and houses like one vast block, with the Tower standing high in the midst of them. If you go out westward in a boat you will see the same picture from the sea.

That is Blackpool, with about 100,000 men, women, and children living in those houses and streets. But once upon a time not a hundred people lived there—no, not even one soul.

For I hardly need tell you that Blackpool was not always there. If you had been sailing on that sea three hundred years ago you would not have seen any town where Blackpool stands. You would only have seen sandhills and grassy cliffs, with a farm or two and a few cottages near the shore.

Those streets of Blackpool were not always there. Most of them were built by men before you were born. For, as you know, you yourself have not always been here, and you will not be here for ever. It is the nature of boys and girls to grow into men and women, then into old men and women, and then

die. You don't understand the mystery; indeed, nobody does, though men have been trying to solve it for thousands of years. But you know something about it. You have seen dead people put in a big box and taken away to the cemetery to be buried in the ground. You will grow up, and pass away, and others will take your place, for that is the law of Nature.

So, other people lived before you, and they made these streets and houses and shops. They lived their life, they did their work, and then disappeared from the world.

You can see the same sort of work going on to-day. Some of you may be engaged in it. If you go on the edge of the town you will see houses being built, in a field. By and by there will be no field, but streets in its place. Thus men turn green places into towns. That's how Blackpool came into being. Once upon a time there was not one house on this spot that is now marked on the maps as Blackpool. These houses and shops, as we see, are being made by men. All the churches, places of amusement, hotels, hydros, have been made by men, too; by men who lived before we came on the scene, and they also made the roads and railways.

But there are some things that men did not make. The ground, the land, the sea, the hills, were there before men. They were there before there was any Blackpool. There were also other towns and villages before Blackpool. If you went along the roads out of Blackpool you would come to villages, as Marton, and Staining, and Carleton, and Singleton, and Weeton, and towns, as Poulton, Garstang, Kirkham, Preston, and, going further away from the sea, the big towns of Lancashire and Yorkshire.

GRANDFATHER'S DAYS.

If you question your father or mother they will tell you that there are many more streets and buildings in Blackpool than when they were boy and girl. Not only have new buildings been put up, but old ones pulled down, for buildings, too, though many

of them have much longer lives than human beings, have their day and pass away. Yet more have been put up than pulled down, and the town is much bigger than it was when our fathers and mothers were children. Then if you ask your grandfather and grandmother, they can go still further back than fathers and mothers, and further still if they remember what their fathers and grandfathers knew and told them of the changes they had seen. I know one grandfather who can recollect when the place where now is Waterloo Road Station, and your school, and all the streets of that district, was fields and sand dunes, while Lytham Road, instead of a street with houses on either side and tram-lines along it, was an old narrow lane with green hedges and orchards on either hand, and men once planted seed and reaped corn where now is the gay racket of the Pleasure Beach at South Shore.

I myself remember when there was no Tower at Blackpool, when most of the land south of the Manchester Hotel was sandhills, and there were grassy cliffs from the North Pier to the Gynn, when there were no tram-lines, no motor-cars, and no aeroplanes flying over the town.

Going further back still, to the time of our fathers and grandfathers, there were no piers at Blackpool, no Winter Gardens, not even a railway station, and not half as many houses and shops, no electric light, and, instead of a hundred thousand inhabitants, only a few thousand. That's in the time of people whose grandfathers were then alive. A gentleman named Porter, who wrote a "History of the Fylde," in which Blackpool is included, tells us about those days, and also records the changes that were going on in his time. In the Reference Room of the Public Library, Queen's Square, you may see some old pictures of Blackpool in the eighteenth century, when Blackpool was in its infancy, and the librarian, Mr. Hill, will be pleased to show you these relics and others. There are also old pictures and coins at the Gymnasium Museum, Revoe, Central Drive.

Before Porter, another gentleman named Thornber, tells us in his " History " what Blackpool was like in the years about 1800 to 1837 (and till now there has been really no other sole and distinct " History of Blackpool " since that date)—the year when Queen Victoria ascended the throne. There were only a few hundred houses, and a few inns, and farms,—not a pier, no promenade (but cliffs like those at Bispham), no Tower, no Palace, no Winter Gardens, no railway, no trams, no motor " sharries," no Pleasure Beach, no steamers, no big hotels. And yet a very sweet and pleasant place, I have no doubt, with the bonny sea, and the beautiful sands and the grassy cliffs, and I am sure the visitors enjoyed it vastly, for folks came from the inland towns to Blackpool in those days. They came in carts and gigs, and coaches, or on horseback (for neither railway trains nor motors, nor even bicycles, had yet been invented), because of the breezy, healthy air of whose wonderful healing and appetising properties there was already a spreading renown, and they bathed in the sea, or rode galloping horses on the splendid sands, or sailed in the fishing boats, and had dances and concerts in the inns, or played with bows and arrows at the archery butts at No. 3, or took walks across the field-paths from the beach to the windmills at Marton (on the land next to where the Oxford Hotel now stands) or Hoo Hill (it stood opposite the Windmill Hotel)—both now gone—or past Layton Hall, just beyond the No. 3 Hotel, to Layton, the village that was there before Blackpool. Layton is the mother of Blackpool —for our town was in its beginning only a part of Layton and was known as Blackpool-in-Layton. From Layton Lane, where you may find to-day the oldest remaining house in Blackpool district—it takes you back nearly two hundred years (there is the date, 1727, on its front)—you may go to the little town of Poulton, a much older place than Blackpool, which the fashionable gentry made their headquarters when they came to our seaside, and in those days, as now, for human nature has not changed like the growing town, the young, the ladies wearing big poke bonnets

and wide skirts and the gentlemen tight white breeches, would be flirting and love-making, and having romance and fun, and old dames would be talking gossip, perhaps scandal, and lamenting how times and manners and fashions had changed since they were girls, just as I believe you may hear other old ladies talking to-day.

Thornber tells us about those days of a hundred years ago. I was not alive then, but all the same I can make a link to Thornber. I knew a man named Robert Bickerstaffe, who knew Thornber. There are also men still alive who can go back seventy years or so, Mr. John L. Smith (a former North Pier director), Ald. John Bickerstaffe, and other gentlemen and ladies. Mr. Alfred Lomax has gathered much interesting material about Blackpool's olden days, and has a number of photographs and lantern slides of its changes and developments.

Before Thornber there was a Birmingham bookseller, William Hutton, wrote a very interesting "Description of Blackpool." He was the first who collected and printed any Blackpool history and traditions. Peter Whittle, of Preston, in 1831, also wrote about Blackpool in a book entitled "Marina."

HUNDREDS OF YEARS.

We have now gone as far back as our grandfathers and fathers can take us. But if we want to get right to the very beginning of Blackpool we must fly back much further through hundreds and even thousands of years. We must get to the days of the grandfathers of our grandfathers, and theirs, and theirs before them. We can do it by waving that fairy wand of imagination over the old churches and halls and farmsteads and villages, the records that men have written and left behind, and from old weapons and ornaments, and tools and earthenware, that have been dug up from the ground where people lived hundreds and hundreds of years ago.

So, let us wave our magic wand, and behold!—Blackpool in the eighteenth century, about 1750—just a few dozen cottages, and the Gynn Inn, and

the Fox Hall (then a farm), and two hotels, a couple of bowling greens, and an old barn used as a theatre (many barns thus being utilised by theatrical companies in those days—there was one in Tithebarn Street, Poulton-le-Fylde—hence the word "barnstormers," sometimes applied to actors).

Back another hundred years, into the middle of the seventeenth century, about 1650, and Blackpool has dwindled down to a few cottages on the beach, as shown in the picture on page 8. There is no Fox Hall, but near the site, just above the little boat in the picture, to the right, is the "black pool," its water coloured by the peaty moss through which it flowed, and from which the town gets its name, at the mouth of the stream (the Spen) running from or near Marton Mere, then a fairly big lake, three miles away. Where now is the bottom of Church Street was a cleft in the cliffs (like there used to be till very recently at the Gynn) from which there was a lane through the fields to Layton, with its old hall and a few cottages. To the right of Layton is Marton district, with Staining Windmill in the background, and further in the distance, to the left, Poulton Church.

Back another hundred years, to 1550, there is no Blackpool to be seen at all. There is only the lonely coast, with wild rabbits running about the dunes near the "black pool" over which the white sea-gulls are uttering their call, and perhaps a fisherman's hut, and in the distance the hamlets of Layton and Marton, with the hills, the Bleasdale and Bowland Fells, a score of miles behind them to the east.

No Blackpool, and yet the germ of it is there—sun and rain and sea and breeze preparing the spot for the birth of the holiday town that should grow so great and wonderful in the years to be. For the real beginning of Blackpool is in these elements shaping the coast and the land out of which it should arise.

Let us take swift flights further back through the centuries—let us watch as in a cinema the pictures of the past out of which Blackpool has unfolded.

BLACKPOOL 300 YEARS AGO—ABOUT 1650.

See ... 7 de ... ptic...

You behold the plain between the sea and the hills, from which the River Wyre runs to Fleetwood (but there is no Fleetwood in this picture of five hundred years ago). You see the old churches with a cluster of houses about them, of Poulton, Kirkham, and St. Michael's on the Wyre, and here and there old halls, Lytham, Rossall, Rawcliffe, Hackensall, Kirkland (near Garstang), Little Eccleston, Mowbreck, and others, and farms and folds. We are back in the eleventh cenutry, about the year 1080, nearly a score of years after William of Normandy, who had sailed from France to England, had defeated King Harold and the Saxons and taken possession of the country, becoming its monarch by force of arms. William the Conqueror, as he was called, had all England surveyed and examined—a sort of census-taking —(he wanted to find out what the country was worth in order to extract revenue), and the records were bound together in two volumes called the Domesday Book. The particulars of our part of Lancashire, which is called " Agmunderness " (variously spelt, as Acmunderness, Egmunderness, etc.), speak of Polton (Poulton), Rushale (Rossall), Brune (Burn), Torentum (Thornton), Carlentun (Carleton), Meretun (Marton), Staininghe (Staining), Biscopham (Bispham), Latun (Layton), Lidun (Lytham), Wideton (Weeton), Michelescherche (St. Michaels), Pluntun (Woodplumpton), Rodecliff (Rawcliffe), Egelstun (Eccleston), Edelswic (Elswick), Singleton, Inscip (Inskip), Midehope (Mythop), and other places in the country between the Rivers Ribble and Lune, but, of course, no mention of Blackpool, for here was only a bleak and barren beach then, included in those words of the Domesday description, which, after naming the places given, says, " The rest are waste."

William the Conqueror gave this land of Agmunderness to his follower, Roger de Poictou.

Glancing further back still through the pages of history we find Saxons and Romans from across the seas coming to England and getting as far north as our part of Lancashire, this fertile plain (which as a whole we call " Windmill Land "), twenty miles

long by twenty miles broad, and first christened by the Danes "Egmunderness," then "Agmunderness" (as we have seen), then finally and very prettily, 'The golden cornfield of Amunderness"—the original name "Edgmunderness" being a compound of a Danish masculine name and "ness," a word for nose—the old Danes who invaded Lancashire and christened the place thus regarded this part of the country as a sort of nose of Lancashire. The same word "ness" occurs in "Fur-ness," Freckleton Naze, or Ness, and in other place-names round our British coast. Names of places tell history by showing what nations thus christened them. The word "Ness" tells us that long ago prowling piratical men sailed from Denmark and settled in our part of the country—not without some fighting, you may be sure, for the natives opposed the invaders. In the interesting Museum (due to the intelligent enterprise of Mr. H. P. Hornby) at St. Michaels-on-Wyre (13 miles out of Blackpool) there is a large picture of these Danish sea-rovers, who were also called "Vikings," as well as specimens of Roman querns or hand-millstones for grinding corn, and stone implements used by the first dwellers in this district, Roman coins, pottery, and other relics from the far past, for the Romans, under Julius Cæsar, a thousand years before William of Normandy, invaded Britain and got into our part of Lancashire, which at that time was such a land of swamps and marshes that it was called "the country of the water-dwellers" (the Segantii). Roman coins, weapons, and a shield were found near Kirkham when a field was being dug up. The Romans also made a track, traces of which are found under parts of the modern roads and lanes, from Freckleton Pool (River Ribble) through Kirkham, Weeton, Mythop (Mythorp), along the old eastern bank of Marton Mere (Chain Lane) to Staining, past the windmill to Poulton and the River Wyre at Skippool. Some Roman soldier, longing for his home far away, thinking of his wife and little ones, may have stood on the lone beach by the "black pool," looking over the sea in the sunset, and perhaps wonder-

ing why emperors and generals dragged men to the far corners of the earth and the wild ends of the world for the glory of conquest and the lust of empire.

We have now gone back two thousand years. Shall we go further and further into the maze of antiquity?

THE " STONE-AGE " MEN.

Behold the oldest Ancient Britons, two to three thousand years ago, living in our land, before the Romans came to take it from their more progressed descendants, the very first Ancient Britons, half-wild men, dwelling in the woods or in caves, or mud huts, and clothed in the skins of wild beasts, and going still further back, thousands of years back, the men of what Science terms the Stone Age inhabited England (which was not thus called then, later it was known as Albion and Britain), and, of course, Lancashire. Men at that time had not discovered how to make iron implements or weapons, they knew nothing of knives, spades, machines, engines, fireplaces and ovens, gas, trams, furniture, books, newspapers, steamers, theatres, picture-shows, ballrooms, whist drives, schools, colleges, nor the other ten thousand comforts and advantages, inventions and learning, amusements and recreations of our civilisation, all gradually and laboriously built up by hundreds of forgotten pioneers to whom we should feel grateful; and yet, no doubt, these long-vanished, uncivilised folks enjoyed their life, with all its hardships, in their way, and some of them had the beginnings of the artistic sense that gives us pictures and poetry and music and romances and sculpture, for on the walls of their cave-houses have been found crude drawings, scratched with a flint or sharp bit of bone, of reindeer and the mammoth (a big, hairy sort of elephant that once lived on the earth, but is now extinct, like many more strange animals and birds that had their being in the early stages of the world, tens and tens of thousands of years ago). Some of the tools, all made of stone, of these primitive forefathers of ours have been found in the soil in various places.

But though at that far-back period, four, five, or six thousand or more years ago, the men who lived in this island of ours, the men who lived where now are Blackpool and the adjacent villages, were what we call barbarians, uncivilised, there were in other parts of the world nations that had attained a high degree of progress and culture. In Egypt the inhabitants had developed to manufactures, arts, and a social system ruled by wise laws. They painted pictures, they had books, they made bricks out of clay, they had fine houses and clothes, they had temples and palaces, they constructed mighty cities and wonderful monuments, they held women in esteem (always a sign of civilisation), and their religion was the first to give the world the idea of immortality (of a heaven after earth). They had also learned how to preserve dead bodies by embalming (to keep the body intact so that the soul could come back to it on the day of resurrection was part of their religious belief), and some of these bodies, called mummies, mostly of kings and queens, thousands of years dead, you may see in their stone coffins in the Walker Museum at Liverpool, the Peel Park Museum, Manchester, or the British Museum, London. I wonder if those long-deceased persons ever dreamed that thousands of years after their death people in a far-off land would look upon their dry corpses and read the inscriptions that summed up their whole life in a few brief lines.

A humorous poet, named Horace Smith (he lived in the reign of Queen Victoria, fifty or sixty years ago), thus addresses a mummy he saw in an exhibition:—

"And thou hast walked about (how strange a story!)
In Thebes streets three thousand years ago,
When the Memnonium was in all its glory,
And time had not begun to overthrow
Those temples, palaces, and piles stupendous,
Of which the very ruins are tremendous!

"Perchance that very hand, now pinioned flat,
Has hob-a-nobbed with Pharoah, glass to glass,
Or dropped a halfpenny in Homer's hat,
Or doffed thine own to let Queen Dido pass,
Or held, by Solomon's own invitation,
A torch at the Great Temple's dedication.

"I need not ask thee if that hand, when armed,
Has any Roman soldier mauled and knuckled,
For thou wert dead and buried and embalmed
Ere Romulus and Remus had been suckled,
Antiquity appears to have begun
Long after thy primeval race was run."

The Memnonium was a temple near Thebes, an ancient Egyptian city, the city of a hundred gates, the then capital of the world, as large as London or Paris, but now its ruins are buried under the accumulated sand and soil of centuries, for as Shakespeare says—

"Time's glory is to calm contending kings,
To ruinate proud buildings with thy hours
And smear with dust their glittering golden towers."

Homer was a Greek poet who lived thousands of years ago. Dido was Queen of Carthage, a North African city on the Mediterranean Sea. Romulus and Remus are the traditional founders of Rome about three thousand years ago.

PREPARING FOR MAN.

Thus we see that while our country was in the rude Stone Age other nations had grown to polish and pomp. For, besides the civilisation of Egypt, there were other advanced nations. While the later Stone Age men were living in the caves and mud huts of Britain, the people of China, the longest-lived empire because of its peaceful ways, were studying astronomy and making inventions, the Assyrian chariots were running about the streets of the great city of Babylon—now only stones and dust in the desert—and its priests were writing records on which portions of the Old Testament are based. Abraham (see Genesis) left Chaldea (in Babylonia) for Canaan, the Israelites had their kings and poets, one of whom wrote the Book of Job (one of the finest and deepest dramatic poems in the world), the Hindus were building magnificent temples and palaces and writing sacred books, and the Greeks were developing their supreme art and culture. There were also civilisations in America (of which Europe, Asia and Africa

knew nothing—it was not discovered till long after the Stone Age was over), in Mexico, in Peru, the monuments and remains of which show a high degree of architectural development.

The evolution of humanity, the progress unto civilisation, is not simultaneous and universal, all nations and races marching together, but is like the arrangements of standards in a school. While some are only learning the alphabet and simple sums others are acquiring grammar and doing problems in proportion, decimals, and algebra. During the long human existence on earth many civilisations, of which all record is lost, must have flourished and faded away. But they were all, every one in its way, fulfilling their part, learning their lessons, contributing their share to the evolution of humanity, and we to-day inherit the essence of their toil and thought and endeavour, just as we also, in our time, consciously or unconsciously, are building for the future.

Back in those remote ages, and further back still, you would find that the physiography of our locality, as well as that of the planet, has changed considerably, as a gentleman named Mr. Ashton points out in his most interesting book, " The Evolution of a Coast Line." By watching and studying the changes going on to-day we can tell what changes there have been in the past.

Some time before the Stone Age—how long nobody knows exactly—almost all our Windmill Land, all the plain from Blackpool to the Bleasdale Fells, was sea bottom. At Boan Hill, between Pilling and Nateby (going towards Garstang), farmers when ploughing have come across the sea-shells of a far-back forgotten beach. The great peat-beds of Pilling Moss, Rawcliffe Moss, and Marton Moss, are evidence that that particular land was once submerged. In the course of the world's evolution the land in many places has many times been sea-covered for thousands of years, and then upraised by earthquake, or submarine disturbance, or deserted by the receding ocean, and thus become dry land again, as the science of geology tells us. Thus were our coal seams made

out of buried forests. Nature, in a thousand ways, with infinite labour and eternal patience, has been doing wonderful work for tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands, millions of years—preparing this planet of ours for the advent of man—so that you could have a fire on the hearth and ride in a train. And Nature has not by any means finished the job yet, not by a long way. There will be many more transformations of the earth's surface, of land and sea, before that work is done. Our present continents will sink beneath encroaching waters while new continents arise in the ocean. The bed of the Pacific may become a new continent while the mountain tops of the Andes are only little islands off its coast. As the poet Tennyson (a little transposed) says:—

> "O earth, what changes hast thou seen,
> There rolls the deep where grew the tree,
> And where the long street roars hath been
> The stillness of the central sea."

There may come a day when once more our Windmill Land will be rolled over by the sea and not a trace of our Blackpool to be seen. But you needn't worry on that account. It won't be just yet. Blackpool, with this generation, and many more generations to follow, will have done its work and fulfilled its part in the evolution programme ere that event.

The sea on our coast to-day flows over places where once people lived in flourishing villages. Out off Norbreck, beyond low-water mark, under the sea, is the hamlet of Singleton Thorpe. Tradition tells of the sea-buried village of Kilgrimol off St. Annes. Even in our time we know how the sea has encroached on the coast north of the Gynn, pulling down the cliffs and gobbling them up. Only fifty years ago there was a field a hundred yards wide on the seaward side of the Uncle Tom's tram-station. Thus our Fylde coast-line—"Fylde" being another old name of the district south of the Wyre to the Ribble, derivation doubtful, but probably meaning "field," though I know one man who claims that it is a corruption of "Filea," Celtic for bard or poet, and was given to the locality by the old Celts, or by Irish missionaries,

who came to preach Christianity to the ignorant natives of Lancashire and the North of England a thousand years ago—and the adjacent country would be much different in the period called the Stone Age.

And further back than that? What sort of men were there here and whence did they come? From the continent of Europe?—once joined to England by land where now is the Straits of Dover. Or originally from Asia? And how did they get to Britain and to Lancashire?

THE FIRST MEN.

And further back still—where did the first men of all come from?

Now we're amongst the questions no mortal can answer fully. The cleverest, the most learned, can only guess.

But science tells us that before the Stone Age there were other epochs of human and planetary evolution. The British Isles (owing to certain changes in the position of the earth's axis) were once polar regions, and icebergs floated over the sites where now we dance in the Tower Ballroom and Winter Gardens. The basin for Marton Mere was scooped out by glaciers which left the boulder-stones found in many parts of the Fylde and on the shore between Blackpool and Rossall. The singular and solitary stone said to cover the grave of the Fylde "witch," Meg Shelton, in Woodplumpton Churchyard is probably a glacier's last word in the story of Lancashire's Ice Age. Before that there was a tropic spell in this part of the world, and jungle beasts roved where now the Blackpool Ramble Club's three hundred members walk the lanes. If they had roamed about in those days—tens and tens of thousands of years ago—they would have met rhinoceroses and lions and tigers, and wouldn't the ladies have shrieked if they had come across a crocodile basking in the mud-banks of the Wyre at Wardleys, or heard an elephant trumpeting in the wood at Windy Harbour, or met a leopard prowling round Preesall Hill, or a gorilla or baboon in the forest of Rawcliffe?

First came plants upon the earth and then fishes and animals and men. How and where and when the first forms of life began no man can tell, but science thinks living things started in the ooze on the sea-shores. It may have been on Blackpool beach. Wouldn't it be a gloriously amazing feather in our cap if science should some day discover that the first forms of life, little bits of sensitive floating jelly (called amoeba) originated somewhere between the Gynn and the Starr Hills?

You never knew such changes, such wonders and mysteries, as our old earth has had through millions and millions of years. There were long geologic eras when rocks were being made, when coal was forming —ages before men appeared on the globe. Prior to that, our planet was a huge burning liquid mass, gradually solidifying through billions of years. Before that it had been (says science) part of a fiery cloud of gas, immense in the heavens, and from this cloud (or nebula as it is called) grew our Sun and the planets, of which the earth is one—the Solar System.

And there and then Blackpool really began—at least, that's about as far back as we can get. Once Blackpool was a little piece of a gigantic nebula in that part of the skies called the Milky Way, which is a universe of stars and attendant worlds.

Sometimes, in a little innocent pride of knowledge, a school-child will write his name and address like this:

John Smith,
7, Brown Street,
Blackpool,
Lancashire,
England,
Europe, The World.

It shows an imaginative conception of one's little place in the big scheme of things. But the youngster could even extend that elaborate address, as follows, by putting after " The World "—

Solar System,
Milky Way,
The Universe.

You live on a little muddy ball in the Milky Way. Let that thought keep you humble. But, put another way, you live on a star amid the spheres of heaven. In that thought be decently proud of your origin and try to live up to your high pedigree. For Blackpool is amongst the stars.

You are but a living speck among a hundred thousand others, on a clod of earth called Blackpool, in a big world which is itself but a pin-point in an infinite universe, and yet at the same time, if you comprehend your relationship to the whole, you are a little spark of the Almighty Light and Eternal Power, born of constellations and suns and the long elaboration of a planet, a pilgrim on earth, yet heir of the heavens, bred and shaped and influenced by celestrial and terrestrial environment, and all that comes thereof, by religion, by government, by laws, by education, by art, by science, literature, labour, fellowship, by human passions and desires, privileged to play a part in this divine Drama of Evolution. See that you play it heroically.

Longfellow says:—

> "I wandered away and away
> With Nature, the dear old nurse,
> And she sang to me night and day
> The songs of the Universe;
> Saying, 'Here is a story-book
> Thy Father hath written for thee."

Thus we somewhat gather how our world, our country, our shire, of which Blackpool is a part, began and developed, and how through millions of years the powers and processes of Nature were fashioning this golden shore and green countryside to be a place of holiday joy for millions of men, women, and children. Nature, with unparalleled patience, has wrought tens and tens of thousands of years to make the uncountable grains of sand with which the youngsters play on Blackpool's jolly strand. A marvellous work.

> "Some call it Evolution,
> And others call it God."

I prefer to think of it as the Book of Evolution, which is also a Book of Revelation, whose author is God.

II.

FIRST FOLKS IN BLACKPOOL DISTRICT.

The first men of whom we find any trace in Blackpool district, as already mentioned briefly, were the men of the Stone Age, the New or Later Stone Age, or as geologists call it, the Neolithic Age. That was long and long before your grandfathers or their grandfathers were alive, long before the Romans, long before Christ was born. Some learned men say it was four or five thousand years ago. But nobody knows exactly how long it was. At that time the country round Blackpool, "Windmill Land"—though, of course, there were no windmills then—between our sea-coast and the eastern hills of Bleasdale (behind Garstang) was a land of swamps, bogs, and forests, right to the sea-edge, which was further to the west than to-day, for evidence of submerged woods has been found off Lytham and Rossall, with the River Wyre, which rises in the Bleasdale Fells, running through the middle of it to the sea into Morecambe Bay, probably where now is the village of Pilling.

The foundations of this district, Windmill Land (the Fylde and Over-Wyre), are the New Red Sandstone Rock (it took Nature millions of years to lay those foundations), now rarely showing at the surface, though you may see traces of it on the beach at Cockersand (over Lancaster Bay from Pilling), because it is covered by boulder clay and sedimentary accumulations of gravel, silt, soil, peat, and vegetation. We may put it this way. The floor of Windmill Land is old red rock covered with a flowered carpet of grass and dark brown mats of peat in places. When the peat beds were deposited the land was four or five yards lower than it is at the present day. The River Wyre (says Mr. G. E. De Rance in the Government Geological Survey in 1875) probably flowed from

Rawcliffe, over what is now Pilling Moss, to the River Lune and Morecambe Bay, while the tide from Skippool (River Wyre) flowed (along where now the railway line runs from Poulton to Singleton and Weeton) up and round to Marton Mere, which was then connected with the Ribble esutary (where now Lytham stands) by a stream and series of lakes (the largest Curridmere, at Peel, being mentioned in old ecclesiastical documents relating to Lytham) over what is now Marton Moss, the site of Lytham then being under the sea, and at the same period the land forming what is now Blackpool, Layton, Warbreck Hill, Bispham, and Norbreck was an island. The Bleasdale and Longridge Fells to the east of our Windmill Land are what geologists call Millstone Grit and Carboniferous Limestone—the coalbeds were formed out of huge forests in the carboniferous period—and in these mountains are the nearest stone quarries to Blackpool. The stone of which Blackpool Parish Church is built came from Longridge. These rocks were made " umpteen " millions of years ago, as the soldier slang of to-day would say. That's the eastern boundary of our district. The western boundary, the sea-shore, is not quite so ancient. The sand-dunes at South Shore and Fleetwood are only a few hundred, perhaps a thousand, years old. They are quite juvenile compared with the mountain rocks. The clay cliffs, boulder clay, from the Gynn to Cleveleys, and under the North Promenade and Lower Walk (Blackpool), are reckoned to date back to the Glacial Epoch—when all Windmill Land was covered with ice (like the Polar regions to-day)—that is also anything from half-a-million to a million years ago.

A wonderful story, isn't it? And if it isn't quite correct as to the figures for the periods of time (for Science can only make clever guesses) it is true in substance.

I like to think of the earth and sky, of Nature, as a gracious and enchanting woman, our Lady Nature, our Mother (of whom and God the Father all things

are born), her feet on the emerald flower-broidered ground, her head in the heavens crowned with golden sun or crescent moon and evening star, the deification whom the old Egyptians called Isis, of the mystic veil, whom the Greeks personified as Rhea, or " the towered Cybele " (in Milton's phrase) and whom the old Celts, to whom the Ancient Britons and Welsh and Irish belonged, called Dana, also Bridged, Bridget, or Bride (Saint Bride), whose birthday is in young spring's white snowdrop time and yellow celandine days (the colours of purity and joy)—and I like to think, further, that our Lady Nature, long, long ago, before you or I or any other people were born, said to herself, as she turned her spinning-wheel of earth amid the stars, " Lo, I have a vision of a fair land I will make, a pleasant domain where folks yet far unborn shall have a merry time, and it shall be called Windmill Land, and its capital shall be a jolly radiant town of Pleasure Palaces by the sea," and so, setting her giant servants, the forces of fire and water, to work in their sub-terranean smithies, whose chimneys are volcanoes (there is evidence of their craters near us and about us in the Isle of Man and the Pennine Mountains and in Wales), she made the layers of rock, or strata, for the floor, and then she said, "Now I will get river and sea to cover the floor with a layer of fragrant fertile bedding, and thus there shall be invisibly interwoven into the texture the music of flowing waters and the lullaby of crooning tides, and the song of the zephyrs, so that there shall be in this land, this plain of golden corn turned into flour for bread by the white-sailed windmills, a sweet soothing spell and happy healing and wondrous restfulness as nowhere else in all the world, then over that I will lay a rich, grassy carpet, all decked with flowers, with coppices and woods for singing birds, and all who dwell or wander in that land shall be so cheerful of heart and find such joyous peace that they shall deem it very heaven."

And thus our Lady Nature wrought for ages, till her dream was realised in this countryside for our life and delight.

Then the men of the Stone Age came here. Where they came from is not known, but probably they were migrants from the Continent (when there was no Straits of Dover, but France and England were joined together and much of the North Sea was dry land). The Stone Age is thus labelled because the folks of that time used stone for tools and weapons. They had not found out how to use iron or other metals. They had not discovered coal, and if they had any fires they used wood. They knew nothing of the civilisation we

Neolithic Stone Hammer-head (with Celt),

Found when Blackpool Cemetery was being extended some years ago It is 6½ inches long. It is in Blackpool Public Library.

know. They had never seen a newspaper or steam-engine, or even an iron needle or a brass button. Theirs was a world in which almost all the common utensils of to-day were absent. Yet at that very time in Egypt, perhaps in India, there was a nation which had some learning, which had temples, and chariots, and erected mighty monuments, just as to-day, while we in Britain are civilised, there are in Africa tribes we call barbarians.

STONE-AGE RELICS.

Some of these long-vanished Stone Age men inhabited Blackpool district. When Blackpool Cemetery (New Road, Layton) was being extended at Hoo Hill, a stone hammer-head, or celt, was dug up. This relic is in the possession of Mr. Hill, at the Public Library (we give a picture of it). It is 6½ inches long. It belonged to one of the Neolithic men who lived on this spot thousands of years before there was any Blackpool. There is also a stone ball for a catapult, used for hunting animals or for fighting. Another stone hammer-head was found during excavations near the

Relics of the Stone Age.

Stone Age hammer-head, with hole for the shaft, 10½ inches long, 4¾ inches in width at the big end, weight 3lbs. Also an older stone, a polished kind of flint (probably used for hammer-head and tied to haft), 12 inches long and 3½ inches wide at top. Both found at Staynall, Over Wyre, when ploughing.

Gas Works in 1881. (See Fishwick's "History of Bispham.") No doubt there are many others buried in our soil. If only stone hammers had tongues as well as heads, what a marvellous tale they could tell. They show that human beings of some kind were living in this neighbourhood ten thousand years before there was any Blackpool. The Stone Age men had no

guns, and they had not even bows and arrows. Their spear-heads were made of stone. If the primitive man, with long, unbarbered hair and beard, and no clothes but a wild beast skin round his waist, who used that ancient stone hammer-head could suddenly get out of his grave (if he still has one) and behold the town of Blackpool on the wild and waste land where he had his mud hut and used to rove, he would be startled out of his wits, scared to death by the trams, trains and motors, which to him would be appalling monsters.

It is from these old buried stone weapons and implements, as well as from later iron and brass ones, also coins, etc., that we glean what little we know of the races of folk who lived long before we came on the scene, just as some day, ten thousand years hence, when Blackpool may be buried under sand, some antiquarian of that future date may find a pillar of the pier, or a gold ring lost by someone or other, or maybe a penny with King George's head on, or, better still, some foundation-stone of a church or public building in which are newspapers and records (though I question whether all papers will not have gone to dust in such a long time).

MARTON MERE AND BRITISH CORACLE.

After the New Stone Age men, and descended from them, no doubt, came the ancient Britons, three or four thousand years ago, more advanced in civilisation, for by this time they had discovered iron and learned how to fashion it into tools and weapons, also how to make bronze (a mixture of copper and tin)—we term this period the Bronze Age. A bronze horse-shoe (says the Rev. W. Bulpit, in "Historical Notes on the Fylde") was found at Staining some years ago. The Fylde during the Bronze Period was largely composed of morass and forest, with wolves and wild boars therein, and the population would be scanty and scattered. These Britons had no houses such as we have, but wicker shelters (made of branches of trees)

in the woods, or clay huts or mud huts in the open places. For clothing they wore animal skins and dyed their bodies with woad (a blue dye from a plant). They made canoes, or little boats, called coracles, of hides (dried skins of beasts) on a wooden framework of tree branches.

When the main dyke was being dug from Marton Mere about the year 1850, two or three of these old

Ancient Briton and His Coracle on Marton Mere.

British canoes were found in the land that was once part of the bottom of the lake before it shrank in size. For lakes, like rivers and seas, change their shape and bed; one bank or shore may fill up with sediment from a stream, and then the water spreads elsewhere. Marton Mere used to extend over a hundred times its present surface, from Marton to Mythop, and was about three miles long and a mile broad. Much of its

decrease is due to artificial drainage in order to reclaim land for agricultural purposes, but it had already diminished a great deal before the main dyke was cut (this Dyke runs from the Mere roundabout towards Weeton and Singleton and into the River Wyre at Skippool, Poulton).

You can imagine an ancient Briton, with a coat of paint for clothes—there were cheap suits in those days—or a few beast-skins tied round him, paddling in his coracle on Marton Mere, catching a few fish and taking them to cook on red-hot stones in his mud-hut, or perhaps to a slanting hole dug in the ground, like a cave, the entrance protected and adorned with leafy branches—or you may behold him one day sailing in his frail craft down the brook Spen, then joined to the series of lakelets connected with the Mere, to the " black pool " by the sea.

III.

THE ANCIENT BRITONS.

So far we have been dealing with long-past ages of which there are no written records, at least, none by the men of our part of the world, and all we learn of them is from dug-up relics and remains, as we have seen, but now we are getting into historical times, of which we can learn something from old manuscripts (really "books," for all books were in writing in those days, long before printing was invented), and we can read what the Ancient Britons were when the Romans invaded our country and took possession of it, though the Romans were not the first foreigners to sail to Britain. Phœnicians and Carthaginians used to sail up the Mediterranean Sea and across the Bay of Biscay to Cornwall for the tin and lead from its mines.

When Julius Cæsar brought his Roman soldiers to Britain 55 B.C. (which, for the benefit of our younger readers, means fifty-five years before Christ was born), the Ancient Britons had developed to a civilisation quite as good as that of their conquerors, though it was different. They were skilled in agriculture and in the arts, they had learned how to use iron and other metals for tools and weapons. Thornber, in his "History of Blackpool," has a picture of an old British axe-head, $6\frac{1}{2}$ inches long and weighing $1\frac{1}{2}$ pounds, made of an alloy of copper and tin, found near Midgeland, in Marton Moss. A. Hewitson ("Atticus") in his gossipy and witty book, "Our Country Churches and Chapels" (1872), says that the Rev. J. D. Banister, Vicar of Pilling, informed him that bronze axes, spear-heads, and a beautiful knife-blade had been found in places where the peat had been cut away on Pilling Moss.

These Ancient Britons had an elaborate religion, called Druidism, which adored the sun, the sustainer of our world, as the symbol of Eternal Light (or God),

and they had fire festivals, in February, May, August, and November. Tradition tells of these Bel-tane fires, as they were named after the god Bel (fire) up to the eighteenth century in the Fylde. Our Fifth of November bonfires undoubtedly have their true origin in this old Druid custom. The Druid priests (or ministers), the chief of whom was styled the Arch-Druid, were men of learning, and, like modern ministers of the Gospel, exempt from war service. The Druids taught the immortality of the soul, though not exactly as it is taught in our churches nowadays. They believed in transmigration and re-incarnation—that is, that men come back to live again on earth many times, in order to learn their lessons and to atone for past ills, that we have all led previous lives in this world, and shall come back again more than once before we have finished with this sphere of existence. Taliesin, the famous Welsh bard who lived in the seventh century, sang a Christian song of reincarnation. "I was in Africa before Rome was built," he chants. Some occult students say that modern Britons are a reincarnation of the old Romans and ancient Britons, as the ancient Romans were a reincarnation of the still older Assyrian warrior race. This belief, which is very ancient, was held by other nations besides the Druid Britons. The early Christians (who came after the Druids) believed it. Millions of people in India, China, and in Europe (including the British Isles) and America, hold this belief to-day. All nations to-day have their religious beliefs about the origin and purpose of the world and the meaning and destiny of man. But primitive man, the men of the Stone Age, had no religion. They were pleased with the bright side of Nature, but afraid of its dark, mysterious aspects. They were glad of the sun, and the moon, but they feared the gloom and the thunder and lightning. Death would be a strange thing to them—they could not understand it. They would perhaps dream of dead companions, and thus get a notion of ghosts. Their simple imagination would people the forests and mountains with invisible beings —fairies, elves, goblins, monsters. Some scientific

men tell us that is how religion was born, of the fancies and fears of our ignorant forefathers. But I do not think such was the case. Religion was born of man's contemplation of the wonder and mystery of the universe. He would see the sun, that makes day and night, on whose light and heat his crops, his food, his life depend, and he would have an admiration for that glorious orb, and ask himself how it came into being, or what Power made it? He would think of that Power as a God, and worship it through its manifestation in the sun. Behind all Nature, he would see a God, or, as in most cases, many Gods. The Ancient Greeks, the Babylonians, the Hindoos, had many deities, with one chief God supreme. A Greek philosopher named Socrates, five hundred years before Christ came with his gospel, taught the immortality of the soul, as related in the books of his great pupil Plato, as also did Pythagoras, a wonderful scholar and profound philosopher, who, like Moses, got much of his learning by study in Egypt, a hundred years before Socrates. Religion—that is, man's conception of the universe and his place in it, his relationship to it and to his neighbour, his idea of a Creator and hereafter—is not the mere consequence of primitive ignorance and fear, neither of worship of Nature, though these things came to be associated with it, as was inevitable—for Nature is God's Book of Revelation, and the sun, moon and stars the signs that indicate the Ritual of the Seasons. Religion is the enlightening result of the quest of exalted souls after the Eternal Truth. Materialistic philosophers tell us that Man made his gods. That is like saying that the trunk of a tree has grown out of its branches, or that the root of the rose-bush has sprung out of the flowers. Somebody may ask, "What's religion got to do with the history of Blackpool?" It is one of the great factors in our environment. Directly and indirectly it affects our lives in a hundred ways. Therefore it is advisable to know something of the evolution of theology. Much of our law, many of our customs, as in marriage, christening and burial, our holiday festivals, "wakes," "feasts," even our games and dances, are either

ecclesiastical ceremonies and regulations, or survivals, relics, remnants of old religious observances. The ideas and devices of old Chaldean, Egyptian, Jewish, Druid, and other priesthoods, influence and mould our lives to-day. We are born into a world largely fashioned for us by long-dead men, into a planet that is a cemetery as well as a garden swinging round the sun. Much of the heritage is sensible, serviceable, but a deal of it is only lumber that were best burnt in the fires of progress. Even theology, like other things, should be modified, improved, to fit our own time and the new days. While socially, scientifically, we have advanced to electric light and tar-sprayed roads, theologically (speaking generally) we are yet in the age of tallow candles and ruts.

THE DRUIDS.

The Druids were the learned men, the historians, the teachers, the poets or bards, the priests, of the Ancient Britons when the Romans, led by Julius Cæsar, invaded our island. Cæsar gives us a description of the Druids in his sixth book of " The Gallic War " (some of our college boys will know something of that book). The Druids had great power, they acted as judges and arbitrators in public and private disputes, and inflicted fines and punishments in criminal cases. Cæsar also asserts that they offered up human sacrifices, but only prisoners of war, or those sentenced to death, say other authorities, on their altars. If this be true, the Druids were no worse than the Romans with their gladiatorial combats, and human sacrifice was common to most of the old creeds. But, judging from their teachings, the Druids were too spiritually and intellectually advanced to be guilty of the barbarity of human sacrifice.

The Druids had great temples of unhewn stone in various parts of Britain (at Avebury, and probably Stonehenge is one, though some students think it is a relic from a much older race than the Ancient Britons, people from the Continent of Atlantis, submerged ten thousand years ago, and now at the bottom of the

Atlantic Ocean), but their principal places of worship were in the open-air, in the woods, in groves of oak trees. They anticipated the poet Wordsworth, who sang, over a thousand years after their time, that there is

> **" A church in every grove that spreads**
> **Its living roof above our heads."**

The oak and the mistletoe were held sacred by the Druids. It is from them we have the Christmas custom of the mistletoe bough, with its osculatory opportunities, which, though the little god Cupid of another mythology—yet dominant in all creeds—crept into the affair later on, was perhaps originally a mere religious fraternal salutation. But it is difficult to decide. Sex and religion are often significantly mingled in the ancient festivals and symbols.

The Druid priests wore a long robe and adornments of office, notably the " Druid's egg," an oval stone, specimens of which have been found in our locality (see Porter's " History of the Fylde "). Tradition says that at Lund (Clifton, near Kirkham) there was a sacred Druid grove.

IV.

THE ROMANS IN BLACKPOOL DISTRICT.

The Romans conquered Briton, and held it for several hundred years. The Britons resisted the invader, but were overcome by numbers, superior military skill and weapons, and such of them as would not submit to the Roman yoke were driven westward into Lancashire and Wales, where the Druid priests had headquarters in the Isle of Anglesey. The Romans, who were great at road-making, made highways across Britain. They also made smaller roads in the Fylde, one, known as the Danes' Pad, because, after the Romans, the invading Danes used it, from Freckleton Pool to Kirkham, where it joined another Roman track running to Kirkham from Ribchester through Lea and Salwick (spelt " Sowick " on the old maps, showing that what some folks think is corrupt dialect pronounciation is really the right old name), and Treales, thence (I conjecture) down what is now a narrow lane (and a very pretty walk) past Mowbreck Hall (Kirkham) along the road to the east of the Union Palace for Fylde Paupers to Weeton (Lane Ends), and then down the lane to the old inn, " Eagle and Child," up the hill and down through Mythop, past Marton Mere, to Staining (turning down to the right at the windmill), and Poulton (Skippool), thus making a line of communication from the River Ribble to the River Wyre, a distance of a dozen miles. At Skippool there was a ford across the river to the Hambleton side (there was no Shard Bridge in those days, remember). From Skippool the Roman track ran north through Thornton to Burn Naze and the Warren at the mouth of the Wyre (long before there was any Fleetwood). I should think the old highway from Fleetwood to Poulton, passing Stanah Ferry,

and on through what we call the Golden Vista, and Poulton golf links, runs over the old Roman track. So it may be that Roman soldiers, two thousand years ago, enjoyed the sight of the glory of the gorse (the like of which they would not see in their native land) in the Golden Vista when they did a route march to the Wyre mouth or to Skippool. As Porter suggests in his "History of the Fylde," and recent writers support him, the Romans most likely had a port at the mouth of the Wyre, which at this time, as Mr. Ashton demonstrates in his "Evolution of a Coast Line," was considerably further to the west than at the present day, being three miles seaward from Fleetwood, at a spot marked on the charts as "Lune Deep."

KATE'S PAD.

Reverting to Skippool, and the ford there across the River Wyre to Hambleton. From Hales Hall, near Hambleton, to Pilling Hall, a distance of three or four miles, there have been found traces, in the peat-beds of Pilling Moss, of a track, or road, made of trunks of trees cut to a uniform length. In 1918 I saw some of these pieces of wood just dug up by the peat-cutters (I believe they are now in the Museum at St. Michaels-on-Wyre). They were about the size of railway sleepers, only round. Many such have been unearthed. This track across the moss is supposed to have been made by the Romans to link up Lancaster with the Wyre ford to Poulton. Pilling Moss natives, however, have a droll solution of the antiquarian puzzle. They say that the tree-trunk track, which is called Kate's Pad, was laid by two old maids of Hales Hall so that they could fetch snuff (of which they were very fond) from Pilling. If those old maids could be proved to have had a certain type of nasal absorber for the tobacco dust we could get humour in here about Roman noses and Roman roads —some confusion of which may have led to the inference that the track was laid by Roman soldiers, which, anyhow, is the more likely theory.

The miller at Pilling has an old earthenware vessel, like a vase, made of clay, found by his father when ploughing. Probably it is Roman.

Mr. William Singleton, a farmer with an antiquarian soul (he looks like an old Roman centurion himself), Rosy Nook, Staynall, on the Wyre, has quite a little museum of old relics found in the district. He showed me a pair of hand-millstones, found in the bed of an adjacent dyke. The upper stone is 3 inches thick and 15 inches in diameter, the nether one 2 inches thick and 17 inches in diameter. In the centre of the upper stone is a hole, to put the grain in, and in the side a small aperture to fix a stick or handle for turning the stone round. These two stones are like the Roman quern, the handmill that was in use before watermills and windmills were invented. There is also an old stone hammer-head, 11 inches long (twice the length of that in the Blackpool Library), found at Stakepool, near Pilling Station, during ploughing, and another stone, shaped and polished, like the head of a battle-axe, found by the gravedigger in Hambleton Churchyard. Mr. Singleton has also old polished flints he has found, a small cannon-ball he turned up in his garden, old clocks, old lanterns, and a number of other recording relics or curiosities, of which we may discourse by and by.

There is also a stone hammer-head, dug up near Fox Hall, in the Revoe Library Museum.

At Ribchester, on the Ribble, the southern boundary of Windmill Land, the Romans had two temples—one to the Goddess Minerva. Like Britain, whose theology comes from the Jewish people, the Romans got their religion from another nation, Greece. In 1889 excavating explorations resulted in the find of portions of one of these two temples (1700 years old). From these ruins came the four pillars now forming the entrance to the Bull Inn at Ribchester. Roman helmets, gravestones with inscriptions, a big gold brooch, and many coins were also unearthed. The epitaph on one tombstone is noteworthy in the fact that it pays tribute to the mother-

in-law who is the subject of such scoff and jest in our times. It is the tomb of a Roman soldier's wife and her mother, and the eulogy reads, " To the memory of an incomparable wife and a very dear mother-in-law."

In some parts of the country (at Sandy, in Bedfordshire, for one place), Roman dolls have been found in the graves of Roman children buried nearly 2,000 years ago, but, so far, none have been found in the land round Blackpool. The ancient Egyptians used to put their dead children's dolls in the tomb with them, and probably many of the images we deem idols were only dolls. The word " doll " itself is merely a short term for " idol.' In 1836, little doll-coffins were found in a cave in Arthur's Seat, Edinburgh (as Mr. Edward Lovett tells us in his interesting book on " The Child's Doll: its Origin, Legend, and Folk-lore). In the mining districts of England to-day, or till very recently, it is still the custom to bury dolls with children.

ROMAN RELICS.

In Lund Church is an old altar, which some antiquarians declare to be Roman, though others differ. At Kirkham many Roman relics have been found, including coins and the central part of a shield (it is now in the British Museum, London). Following the old Roman track across the Fylde remains of the Roman legions, as well as of the Danish invaders who came later, are found at several places. Thornber speaks of spears, horse-shoes, stone hammers, and a battle-axe ploughed up at Mythop and Weeton. Near Weeton Lane Heads, in " Limed Hall, Moorfield," broken pottery and urns were discovered (all before 1837). This spot was also reputed to be haunted by a hairy boggart.

At the end of the first hundred years of the Roman occupation, the Britons, who had never liked the foreign yoke, tried to overthrow their conquerors and drive them out of their island, but they failed. In the year 61 A.D. (Christ had been born and crucified since the Romans first invaded Britain—Christ also

was born in a province subject to the Romans, who held sway over most of the known world at that time) the discontented Britons, under the "Warrior Queen" Boadicea,—Cowper describes her in a poem which you may have seen,—made a stronghold and refuge in Wales, in the Isle of Anglesey, the headquarters of the Druid priesthood. The Romans resolved to subdue these malcontents. At that time the bulk of the Roman army was in Lancashire, and some authorities say that they sailed from an old port (now under the sea at Lune Deep) at the Wyre mouth, in specially-made flat-bottomed boats to Menai Straits (60 miles). The British soldiers were defeated, all killed, and Druids and Druidesses (for there were female priests—priests' wives) and their followers, and all the aged people and children who had sought protection under them, were every one massacred.

One wonders if that old singing-game heard amongst the children sometimes—

> "Are you ready for a fight?
> We are the Roman soldiers.
> Yes, we're ready for a fight,
> For we are the British soldiers"—

comes down from those old far-off days of battle and slaughter (though the world doesn't seem to have improved much in that respect since the time of the Ancient Britons and Romans, does it?).

Old Roman coins have been found in the sand at Harrowside, South Shore—perhaps from Roman vessels sunk in storm—and a great many, over 400, near Rossall Point. For, whether it was on the Wyre or on the Ribble (the historians differ, though I think myself the evidence is in favour of the Wyre) the Romans had a port somewhere on the Fylde coast—probably two or three ports—one at Walton, near Preston, one at Freckleton Pool, and another at Wyre mouth.

You may have noticed that there is no mention of any Old British coins having been found. The deduction is that the British did not use money. They traded by barter, that is by exchange of goods,

A 17th Century Map of the Fylde.

above Map, published at Amsterdam in 1622, shows the old Fylde villages and halls. The
han track, or aggar, called Danes Pad, running along the Wyre to Poulton (Skippool), and
kham (with a branch to Freckleton Pool), Treales and Sowick (Salwick, Clifton), has been
added to this map from other old maps and some original sketches.

which is the oldest way of buying and selling. If a man wanted a spear he would exchange a pig or a goat for it, and the same with everything else. But the Romans (and some other nations) had advanced from barter to the use of round pieces of metal for exchange purposes. Instead of taking a goat to exchange for a calf or for poultry or anything else they agreed to have a certain piece of metal to represent so much value. All money is a token and guarantee of certain value, to save carrying cumbrous things about for exchange.

[Roman coins found in Blackpool district may be seen in the Revoe Library, Central Drive, Blackpool.]

THE ROMANS LEAVE.

Under the Roman rule Britain became prosperous, roads were made, manufactures and trade developed, aqueducts and great buildings were erected, as well as public baths—the Romans, like the Britons, had a love of cleanliness—and Roman laws and customs prevailed. But in the year 410 the Romans had to leave Britain to fight for the existence of their own Empire, which was breaking up. Success and dominion had resulted in luxury and vice, which mean weakness and decay, and the great Roman Empire fell a prey to invaders. Thus it reaped what it had sown, as all nations do, sooner or later. Before Rome, Babylon, Thebes, and other great cities and empires had had their glorious rise and sad fall, yet how slow men are to take the lessons of history. Only kingdoms founded on righteousness can endure. When we think of

> "The glory that was Greece,
> And the grandeur that was Rome"

(as Edgar Allan Poe sings), let us also remember Kipling's lines—

> "Far-called, our navies melt away,
> On dune and headland sinks the fire,
> Lo, all our pomp of yesterday
> Is one with Nineveh and Tyre!
> Judge of the Nations, spare us yet,
> Lest we forget,—lest we forget."

That verse is true of the Romans. When they left Britain they never dreamed that they were going home to be caught in the doom of their Empire. They thought they would come back. Many of them, traders and others, had settled here. Some of them remained. The 400 coins found at Rossall may have been hidden by a Roman soldier till he came back, or perhaps by a merchant when the Scots came surging down from Caledonia.

Roman Coins Found at South Shore.

These are three specimens of Roman Coins, now preserved in the Museum at the Revoe Library, discovered in the Blackpool district. They are each $\frac{3}{4}$in. diameter and $\frac{1}{8}$in. thick. They were struck at Alexandria, the first two during the reign of Gallienus (A.D. 259), and the third during the reign of Claudius II. (A.D. 268).

V.

THE SAXONS, DANES, AND NORMANS.

After the Roman army had quitted Britain, Scottish tribes and clans, hitherto kept in check by the Romans, who had built a great fortressed wall between England and Scotland, swooped down upon this country. It would thus seem that the Scottish inclination for our part of Britain is an ancient and old-established characteristic. The Britons, without the protection of the Roman army, were at the mercy of the raiding Scots, and in their plight they asked the Saxons to help them. The Saxons, scenting spoil, were quite willing to oblige. They came to help the Britons, and they stayed to help themselves. The Britons found that it was a case of calling in thieves to eject thieves, an out-of-the-frying-pan-into-the-fire experience. Then the Danes, the Vikings, came and harassed our coast. The Saxons, one tribe of whom was called the Angles, from whom England got its new name of Angle-land, soon shortened to England, settled here and took possession of the country, as the names of villages and towns indicate. Names of towns ending in " ham " and " ton " show that the Saxons imposed that christening on the place. There is evidence of their influence in the Fylde in the names of the villages, Marton, Bispham, Hambleton, Carleton, Cockerham, Singleton, etc. They also brought their religion, the Scandinavian, akin to that of the Norsemen or Danes, and our days of the week still bear the names of Scandinavian and Saxon male and female deities, Sunday, the Sun's day, from Sunan the Sun; Monday, Moon's day, from Monan the Moon; Tuesday from Tyr, or Tuisco, god; Wednesday from Woden (Odin), a god; Thursday from Thor, a god; Friday from Freya, a goddess (the Roman Venus); and Saturday from Seatter, a god (or maybe from the Roman god Saturn). Philological authori-

ties differ about these derivations. Some say Sunday and Monday are from Anglo-Saxon roots. Language, like most of the things in this world, is now a great mixture. Very likely both Saxons and Danes (or Scandinavians) all got their speech from one original source. Carlyle (in his book " Heroes and Hero Worship ") thinks Odin, or Woden, was originally a great leader, teacher, bard, eventually deified by tradition. The Norse, Danish, or Scandinavian mythology, or religion, represents the universe as a growing tree, better than the materialistic notion of it as a machine, says Carlyle. The Norse God of Thunder, Thor, is said to be the source of the story of Jack the Giant Killer. Thus, in the whirligig of time, do great gods dwindle to nursery heroes.

The Britons settled down under the Saxons, assimilating their religion and customs. Each village had common land, for the use of all, and allotments, under the lord of the " manor " (the term the Normans afterwards gave to the little Saxon communities and townships) who originally took and held the position by virtue of being a leader and protector, but later on developed into a master, often a tyrant. At first, under the Saxons, England was divided into seven kingdoms, our district being in that of Northumbria. But in the year 830 these seven kingdoms were all merged into one, under Egbert. Soon after, Egbert, Alfred the Great (the hero of the famous story of the burnt cakes) was king, and a good king, too, and in his reign England was divided into counties, our own shire being called Lunecastershire (from the chief town Lunecaster, on the Lune), gradually abbreviated to Lancashire. The counties were subdivided into hundreds (consisting of ten tithings, and each tithing of ten freeholders) and this district, extending from the sea to the hills, was called the Hundred of Amounderness.

CHRISTIANITY COMES.

During the Saxon period Christianity was introduced into Britain by missionaries from Rome (A.D. 596), and thus came a new and truer religion, the

religion of goodwill and compassion, ousting the gods of the Saxons, though some of the Saxon religious festivals, as also of the Druids, were assimilated by Christianity.

When and how Christianity, the flower of the creeds, the lily in the garden of religions, was first planted in our part of the country nobody knows, though Porter says that about the year 936, " Athelstan, King of the Angles, gave to the omnipotent God and to the Apostle Peter at his church in the diocese of York a certain section of land which the inhabitants call Amounderness " (that being, as already mentioned, the old name of our Fylde and Over-Wyre regions). But whether anybody came from York to preach in the district is not known. Long before that time, however, it is likely that some of the missionaries of Columba, from Ireland, had been in the Fylde, and that the churches at St. Michaels-on-Wyre and at Kirkham were established about the seventh century. The early Christian Church in this country sought to abolish slavery, for in the time of the Romans and Saxons many of the poor people were held in slavery and sold like beasts, and some were taken to Rome and other places abroad to be sold. Alfred the Great had hard work to hold his country against the Danes (Norsemen, Vikings), who, through his clemency, had been allowed to settle in the North of England. There were a great many of them in the Fylde, as the Danish words " breck " and " kirk " show—as in Norbreck, Warbreck, Kirkham, Mowbreck, Larbreck, Brock, etc. Steynall and Steyning (names of Fylde villages) may also be part Danish words—some of our Fylde names being a curious and revealing union of Saxon and Danish. For instance, the first syllable of Kirkham is Danish and the second Saxon.

THE NORSEMEN.

There seems to have been constant quarrelling, and often fighting, between the Saxons and the Danes, especially after the death of King Alfred the Great, and the country must have been very unsettled, and

work and trade carried on under difficulties and in uncertainty and insecurity. A man would never know when his crops and cattle were safe. In the year 1002 the King Ethelred (Saxon), suspicious that the Danes were plotting to seize the country, and afraid

Ancient Viking Boat.

Ancient Viking boat setting off for the Isle of Man from the Wyre mouth (long before Fleetwood was in existence), a thousand years ago. Somewhat of a contrast to the modern steamer "Viking," which now sails from the same place.

they would take his crown and his life, circulated secret orders for his subjects to rise and eject or kill all the Danes in the land. This murderous mandate was carried out, and on the day appointed the Saxons (Anglo-Saxons) rose all over the country and fell upon

the Danish settlers, butchering them, and sparing neither man, woman, nor child. As there were many Danes established in the Fylde, especially near the Wyre and Ribble, because of its nearness to the coast, there must have been great slaughter in this district, and probably the many human bones found in a heap at Weeton Lane Ends (in the Roman Agger or Danes' Pad) were grim relics of a battle or massacre there.

There is a tradition that many Danes, chased by women armed with frying-pans, escaped out of Poulton and fled up the River Wyre from Skippool in their boats, on the Shrove Tuesday—which is the reason why the day of pancakes is celebrated with such gusto in the old metropolis of the Fylde.

King Sweyn of Denmark took swift and savage vengeance for the massacre of his countrymen. His fleet of ships with dragons' heads at their prows, and the sign of the black raven of the Vikings on the flags, sailed to England, and his armies ravaged the north, the six northern shires called collectively Northumbria. They devastated Lancashire into a desert. With fire and sword, marching along the Roman track from the Ribble, through Kirkham and Weeton to Poulton, pillaging and slaying, they filled the Fylde with the conflagration of burning farms and its fields and lanes with slaughtered Saxons. The memory of that destruction and death remained long in the name given to the road along which the Danes marched with their raven banners at the head of their army of vengeance —" The Danes' Pad."

HISTORY IN NAMES.

Many of the Danes must have settled in England, and inter-married with Saxons and Britons, for Nature and sex are stronger than the racial animosities played upon by the ambitions of rulers and kings, as some of our Fylde names and patronymics, or surnames, show. Philologists say that " Wyre," which means the " bright water," is Danish. Parr, Rimmer, Gardner, Mather, Orry, Orme, Ormerod, Billing, Uttley, Barker, Bannister (the bath-keeper), Boucher (Butcher), Milner, Foster, Forster, Chapman,

Coleman, Grime, Naylor, Kemp (a soldier), Dean, Lund, Beckett, Molt, Birch, Cawthorne, Higginbottam, Darvel (or Darwell)—you may see this name to-day on a shop in Poulton—Speke, Thornber, Raby, Robbinson, Hurst, Thorley, Swarbrick, Ribby, Ellis, Lund, Lindsay, Kell, Okell, Kellett, Nelson, Adamson, Stevenson, and many others, ending in "son," are Danish names. Eric, Elsie, Harold, Ronald, Reginald, Ralph are Danish Christian names. Elswick is said to be derived from "Uller's-wick," while "Ribby" figures in "Ribby-with-Wrea"—near Wrea Green, Kirkham. But it is very difficult to get at the real roots of names and there is much guesswork based merely on paragrammatical correspondences.

The Danes (Norsemen, Vikings) were great sea-rovers, hardy, heroic, adventurous. They loved the great waters and took their ships wherever they could get their keels. They were no worse than their neighbours, the other nations, the Saxons, and Angles, indeed, in the qualities of courage and endurance they were better, and it is to the infusion of their blood into our race that we modern British owe our exploring and colonising characteristics and our glory on the sea.

The present inhabitants of the Fylde, and of old Blackpool, are a mixture of generations of Britons, Romans, Saxons, and later of Normans (French), but despite all these influences and comminglings, the ancient British influence predominated, as is shown in the folk-speech, or dialect, of the Fylde, which, as Thornber pointed out nearly a hundred years ago, before State education had begun to modify it into modern English (though you may still hear it, uncorrupted and jolly, in the villages of Windmill Land), much more resembles the Welsh (Celtic, British) than the Saxon.

However, that is matter for argument. It is difficult to decide our pedigree, and it is not of much consequence. It is of much more importance that we should do our best to make the world better and happier for those who shall follow us.

THE NORMANS.

William of Normandy, claiming the English throne, invaded England and defeated Harold, the Saxon King (who was slain in the fight), at the Battle of Hastings in the year 1066. William parcelled the country out among his followers, adventurers and plunderers, who treated the conquered English harshly. He made strict, cruel laws to keep the people in subjection. He laid whole districts waste for sport, driving the inhabitants away to die of starvation. He was the monarch who had Domesday Book compiled, not from any pure desire to acquire knowledge of the country, but in order to inflict heavy taxation. He does not seem to have been a very nice character. But he must have had some good points. Let's charitably hope he was not so bad as history depicts him.

Some people proudly claim that they can trace their pedigree back to the time of King William the First. They boast that their ancestors came over with the Conqueror. As they were mostly a band of robbers and plunderers who came over with that gentleman, I should think the less said about the matter and the better.

The Normans built big, strong castles for their own protection against the subjugated English, who were naturally discontented and rebellious, and to awe the people. They built the Tower of London, as W. S. Gilbert says in " The Yeomen of the Guard ":

" When our gallant Norman foe made our merrie land his own,
And the Saxon from the Conqueror was flying.
At his bidding it arose in its panoply of stone,
A sentinel unliving and undying."

There are no castles, either standing or in ruins, in the immediate Blackpool district, or in the Fylde. The nearest is Lancaster, originally a Roman fortress (with a water-mill, say some antiquarians), to which towers and keeps were added by the Saxons and Normans, the main superstructure being erected by Roger de Poictou, one of the Conqueror's followers, who was given the district of Amounderness, which includes

the Fylde and Over-Wyre. There is also the fragment of Greenhalgh Castle, near Garstang.

If you wish to read about the last struggle of the Saxons against the Normans put into picturesque yet historically faithful romance, you will find it in Kingsley's story of "Hereward the Wake, the last of the Saxons," who, with his followers, held out a while in the Fen district, the flat sea-coast lands of Lincoln and Norfolk, much resembling our Fylde. Those were the days when men wore armour, and you may see the funny side of those "good old times" in a merry play called "When Knights Were Bold."

At the time of William the Conqueror there were three churches in the Fylde—Kirkham, St. Michael's, and Poulton, which is mentioned in 1094. The earliest documentary reference to Bispham Church is 1189. Poulton was the chief town, the centre, the capital of the Fylde, and held that position until Blackpool arose and eclipsed it.

There were 9,250 manors or villages in England at the time the Domesday Book was compiled, and each of these was under a lord, lord of the manor. Under these lords were the villeins (a sort of farmer) who rented land, and the cottars, or labourers, who held smaller portions of land, but were too poor to own ploughs or oxen of their own, and had to combine to get or hire ploughs. Rent was not paid so much in money as in labour or goods, though by this time there was coinage in the land. The Saxons and Danes used metal money, but no specimens have been found, so far as I know, in the Fylde. In addition to the villeins or cottars, who were bound to the soil and could not quit one village or manor without the lord's permission, there were free tenants, or sokemen, who could leave one manor for another if they wished.

You will perceive that the small farmers and agricultural labourers and workmen were really slaves in the Norman days. They had no trade unions for defence—those did not arise till 800 years later.

FIRST MENTION OF WINDMILLS.

Domesday Book records thousands of water-mills, invented by the Greeks and Romans about 70 years before Christ was born, and introduced into Britain about the third century, but makes no mention of any in the Fylde. Before the water-mill handstones were used. They were called querns, and consisted of two circular stones, about a foot in diameter, one turned round on top of the other, with the corn between for grinding. A pair of these old mill-stones, perhaps Roman, was found by Mr. William Singleton, farmer

Old Stone Hand-mill for Corn.
Dug up in a dyke at Staynall, Over Wyre.

Staynall (over the Shard Bridge on the Wyre), when excavating a dyke. The upper stone is 16 inches diameter, weight 44¾lbs., hollowed and shaped on the top into a hole, with stone handle across it (but all one piece of stone), for the corn to be put in. The lower stone is 19 inches diameter, and weighs 32lbs., with an aperture in the centre to fix it on a peg, which also fits into a hole in the upper stone, so that the latter may revolve on the former. In the side of the upper stone is a small round hole, evidently for fixing a peg to act as handle for turning the stone. Where

there were no water-mills or windmills near, these hand-stones or querns were in use at farms till the 17th and 18th centuries in Lancashire.

Windmills were not invented till two or three hundred years after water-mills, and nobody knows when or where the first windmill was made or who made it.

In the "History of Corn-milling," by Richard Bennett and John Elton, the first mention of a windmill in England is at Bury St. Edmunds in the year 1191, but according to old records, the Fylde can beat that date by a year. Windmills were owned or controlled by the church in many cases, and in 1188 there was a Benedictine Priory at Lytham—Lytham Hall is near the site of the monastery, of which all trace is long gone—and Mr. T. Harrison Myers states in his pamphlet "The Story of the Windmill," that ecclesiastical documents show the existence of a windmill at Lytham in 1190. So Lytham can boast of having the oldest windmill site in England, or in the world. The windmills—or at least previous mills on their sites—at Kirkham, Staining, Singleton, Clifton, and other places in the Fylde go back over 400 years, maybe more, but the exact dates are not known.

Blackpool at the time of the Norman Conquest was only a "black pool" in a region of marsh, and moss, and dune, with a few mud huts here and there by the sea.

VI.

THE DEFINITE BEGINNINGS OF BLACKPOOL.

The first mention of Blackpool in old records is in a document about Rawcliffe Hall, and even then it is not the full name, though it implies it, but only half the name, a foreshadowing, a herald.

In the year 1416 (time of King Henry the Third) the use of "le pull"—that is "the pool," and means the "pool" that was afterwards called the "black pool" on our shore, was granted (see History of Poulton and Bispham in Chetham Society's publications) to William Boteller, of Rawcliffe and Rawcliffe Hall, or Manor, which was not situated where stands the present Hall, but nearly a mile to the west, at the corner called Town End, where the highway from Shard and Hambleton turns down to the River Wyre and to Buck Ford (bones of deer have been dug up hereabouts on the Larbreck side of the river), thence past the gates of the present Hall to Cartford Bridge—but no bridge was there then.

The old cottages at that particular corner are said to be part of the structure of the old manor. Tradition says there was also a windmill close by, which is very likely—an adjacent field is called Mill Field.

The Bottlers or Butlers, who took their name from being appointed to the office of royal butler, had, in the eleventh century been given, amongst other lands and estates, the whole of the district of Out Rawcliffe and a part of Staynall (a carucate—that is, 100 acres).

You will note that the reference to "the pool" —"le pull"—is in French, showing the influence of the language of the Norman conquerors, which was used for clerical and legal purposes, and spoken by the upper classes, while the common people talked a

mixture of old English, Saxon, Danish, and British. In his romance of " Ivanhoe " Sir Walter Scott graphically emphasises this fact, putting amusingly significant examples into the mouth of Wamba, the merry thrall (slave) who says that the pig is called " swine " (which is Saxon) when in charge of the Saxon workers or slaves, but " porc "—pork (French) when it gets to the table of the Norman lords or masters.

As stated in a previous chapter, William the Conqueror gave Amounderness—the Fylde and Over Wyre, extending to the Bleasdale and Longridge Fells and the Ribble—to Roger de Poictou, but that free-booter, becoming rebellious, was banished out of the country, and in 1194 his estate of Amounderness was given to Theobald Walter, another Norman who had come to seek fortune in England with William. The document of conveyance states that the King " gives and confirms to Theobald Walter the whole of Amounderness with its appurtenances by the service of three knight's fees . . . . all the Forest of Amounderness, with all the Venison and all the Pleas of the Forest . . . and the rights in wood and plain, in meadows and pastures, in waters and mills, in fishing ponds and fishing, in peat-lands, moors and marshes, in wreck of the sea, in fairs and markets, in advowsons and chapelries, and in all liberties and free customs."

Theobald Walter was appointed Sheriff of Lancaster in 1194 (time of Richard the First), when he died, his son, who succeeded to the estates, was appointed the King's Chief Butler of Ireland, and then adopted the name of Butler (formerly spelt Bottiler) for the family, branches of which settled at Rawcliffe Hall and Kirkland Hall (near Garstang).

I don't suppose William Butler, of Rawcliffe, would deem " the pool " of any great worth when it was granted to him five hundred years ago by his king. All the site of Blackpool was then cliffs and sandhills. But what would he think if he could see it to-day and know its land values?

CENTURIES OF DEVELOPMENT.

Much had happened, though nothing particularly affecting the Fylde district, from the time of the Norman Conquest (1066) and Domesday Book to the first mention of "the pool" in any historical document (1416). Kings had reigned and died, manufactures and arts and architecture had advanced a little, there was progress in housing and clothing. Beds were invented. Previously people had slept on the floor. The Ancient Britons could never tumble out of bed, because they had none.

Really wonderful things had come to pass since the Stone Age we talked of in a preceding chapter. Men had found out how to fashion iron into wheels, ploughs, weapons, and a hundred other things. They had learned how to make fire. A simple thing to us, so simple, such a common factor of our everyday life that we think nothing of it. But every one of the ordinary articles in use to-day must once have seemed marvellous. The first wheel must have been a great invention in its time. The first needle, too (the first needles were made of fish-bone with a hole drilled in) —it must have required some thinking out. But the first making of fire seemed so miraculous that legend, in the Grecian story of Prometheus, says that man "stole it from heaven." Just try to think how, if you were a man living in a wood, knowing nothing whatever of matches, you would make a fire. You would have seen the fire of the lightning, perhaps the blaze of a volcano, or maybe vegetation set on fire by the heat of the sun or sparks struck accidentally out of stones or flints, but you would have no idea how it came about. You would have deemed it impossible for men to make fire artificially. The first of our Stone Age ancestors who found out how to kindle a fire by rubbing two pieces of wood together till sparks came was a genius, as great as any inventor since, for without fire all the foundations of our civilisation, our trade—all our power of steam and electric engines—would collapse. With the aid of fire man could melt and mould and mix the metals to

make tools and weapons. He could also cook. Prior to the discovery of making a fire man's food must all have been eaten raw.

But, from the Stone Age to the Norman Conquest, men in Britain had found out how to do many things, and make things. That is what Man is on earth for, to learn how to shape it towards his ideal. For, even from the earliest times, man has had an ideal, a thought of how he may alter and improve his world and make it more comfortable, beckoning him on and on, from one step forward to another. Even the Stone Age man must have had some ideal, or he would have remained much like the animals, who never invent anything—he had an ideal to make tools and hunting weapons of stone.

That's long, long ago, and men have devised ten thousand contrivances and conveniences since then. But the ideals are still beckoning us on to dreams of new inventions, to new ways of government, new arrangements of society, new ways of brotherhood amongst the nations—all beckoning us on to make the world better and better for everybody as the generations go by.

WAYSIDE CROSSES IN WINDMILL LAND.

So our country had got many new things from the time of the Ancient Britons to the time of the first mention of Blackpool in the fifteenth century. It had got the art of writing (the Egyptians and Chinese and Phœnicians and other nations had it long before us), and of weaving cloth for wear and tapestries for decoration, and fashioning utensils in metal, as well as armour, and of making ornaments in gold and silver. It had also its bards making poetry and its historians writing records.

In the seventh century Caedmon, a poor serving-man at a monastery in Northumbria, made a poem about Christianity. The " Venerable Bede " translated the Gospel of St. John into English verse. King Alfred, a scholar and writer himself, greatly encouraged learning and education, and started schools.

The English Chronicle, or Saxon Chronicle, is written by various hands, from King Alfred's time to the period following the Norman Conquest.

Then there is the rhyme-story of "Piers the Plowman," followed by the poetry of Chaucer, our first great English poet (fourteenth century). Romances—the forerunners of the modern novel—also began about this time, by Geoffrey of Monmouth and others. Ballads blossomed out of the soul of the people. The hero-outlaw, Robin Hood, who loved not the Norman oppressors, figures in many of these old songs. The fame of the greenwood chief who plundered the rich and gave to the poor has outlasted that of the kings and barons and bishops he defied.

John Wycliffe (about 1380) translated the Bible into English. He was a theological reformer, a fighter for religious freedom, and denounced by the Church—the Church of Rome, for there were no Protestants in those days (though Wycliffe may be called the herald of them), no Church of England, no Wesleyans, no Baptists, no Congregationalists, no Unitarians, no Salvation Army, no sects at all, but only the Holy Catholic Church of Rome, the first Christian Church. All the country was Catholic at this time.

Along the highways were wayside stone crosses, where pilgrims and passers-by might kneel for a moment's prayer. To-day you may find several of these crosses in our neighbourhood on the sites and old base-stones of the original crosses; but, of course, the present crosses are of recent erection, put up by an antiquarian gentleman. There is one at the cross-roads on the old Roman track near Clifton windmill (Salwick)—picture of it on page 56—one on the Kirkham road to Preston, one at Lytham, one on the Kirkham road to Freckleton (old Roman track), and in two or three other places.

There were many abbeys, priories, and monasteries in the land, centres of learning and charity. They were also places of refuge for quiet souls who fled from the turmoil of the constant friction and civil war between the Normans and the English. England

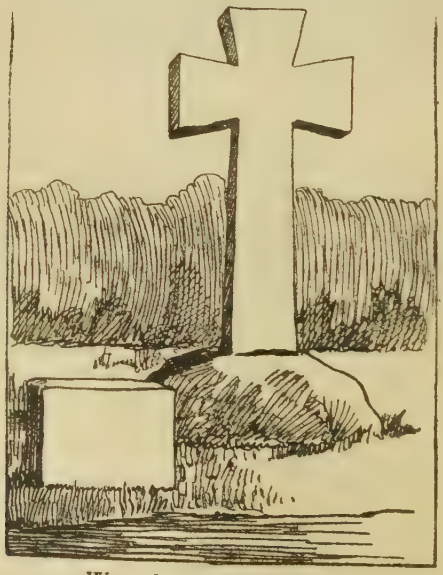
(1145) was in a state of strife and misery. Not less than 1,500 fortresses, garrisoned by lawless and licentious men, are said to have been erected in this period. The woods were full of robbers preying on whom they could. The " Saxon Chronicle " says: " The earth bore no corn. You might as well have tilled the sea, for the land was all ruined, and it was openly said that Christ and his saints slept."

The abbots were in many cases the owners or controllers of domains which they had acquired, or which had been given them by lords and barons. Many monasteries were built about this time. But for such retreats here and there amid the huts of the oppressed peasants and the castles of plundering nobles, the population would have consisted only of beasts of burden and beasts of prey.

For instance, Bispham " with its tithes, houses, and orchards " (then called Biscopham), the mother parish of Blackpool, was given by somebody called Godfred to the monastery of St. Mary of Lancaster (about the year 1094), Roger de Poictou at the same time giving the same monastery two carucates (200 acres) of land in Poulton (see Harleian M.S. 5764, first folio). Later it got into the possession of the Butlers of Rawcliffe Hall—along with Norbreck, Marton, Warbreck, Layton, and our black " pool,"—old records indicate that it was seized for debt. The abbots of Stanlawe (Cheshire) and of Whalley held the land round Marton Mere (Staining, etc.). The monks of Durham had Lytham district.

All England, as already stated, was at this time (and for long after) Catholic, under the Church of Rome, and religion, or rather theology, which is man's regulation of religious beliefs, as a cup, or basin, or glass, is but the vessel that holds water to drink, is a sorely controversial subject, but it must be mentioned because of its influence in history. One regrets to say it has been the cause of much strife and many wars. We see its effects even to-day in Ireland. There should be liberty for all religious beliefs. That's all right. But we should not quarrel and fight about them. That's all wrong.

We see how religions and creeds have faded away or been absorbed by newer religions. From the gods of the ancient Britons and of the Danes and Saxons we have got to the Gospel of Christ (which is the best religion in the world if only all who profess it would practise it). Religion and theology grow, progress, change, evolve, like everything else. John Wycliffe, as we have seen, following his conscience, rebelled against the dominating dogmas of the Roman Church. Later on, and till our time, there were other religious revolts, disruptions, severances, splits. And they are still going on, and always will go on, so long as some men will not allow all men the right to think for themselves, which is the right of every soul, for without that right there could be no progress, no civilisation, and no real religion.



Wayside Cross at Clifton.
On the site of a cross that stood on the spot in the Middle Ages.

VII.

IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

From the Norman Conquest to the fifteenth century (to the year 1416, when the " pool " is first mentioned in historical documents), man was at work in our land fulfilling his evolving destiny, nationally, socially, and individually, working, playing, thinking, fighting, inventing, in a world vastly different from ours, lacking many things we possess, and with no newspapers to record and picture its daily doings. What an interesting thing it would be if there were old newspapers of that time in which we could survey the black-and-white shadows of its events, as luckier future historians will some day have the opportunity of doing from our newspaper files and books and films.

We should read accounts and see pictures of colleges and universities being built, of towns getting municipal charters, of trade and commerce growing, of England exporting woollen goods and tin and lead, of the Great Charter (liberties of the people) forced from the King (1215), of banks coming into use, and even of paper money, copied from the Chinese, in Italy, of the Franciscan friar Roger Bacon, at Oxford University, such a wonderful fellow at chemistry and mechanics, and one of the great scientists of his time, that the common people thought he was a dealer in the " black art," and in league with Satan (1269), of the advance of doctoring and surgery, most remedies in those days being nature's own herbal physic, of the coming of the Jews into England and their persecution, of the development of Parliament and the making of laws, of the growth of boroughs and grants of municipal charters, of the rise of merchant guilds and trade guilds (such as Preston Guild, the only one surviving now, having a celebration every twenty years, there being one last year, 1922), and of the increasing influence of Christianity.

It was a world of castles and moats and drawbridges, of abbeys where the monks laboured lovingly

at making beautifully illuminated manuscript books (there were no printing machines yet), of churches, with the small pipe organs of that time. There were " mystery " and " morality " plays, based on Bible themes, got up by the priests—concerning which dramas old records have such quaint and droll items of expenditure as " paid 2d. to the Devil," " 2d. to an Angel," " 2d. to Noah," " 3d. to God," which means, of course, to the persons playing those parts—to counteract the shows of vagrant minstrels and harpers, singing ballads about the events of the day, jugglers, mountebanks, and other travelling entertainers going from village to village on market day—all open markets round the village cross—which was also a holiday and fair day. The roads were mostly ruts or puddles, according to the weather, and there were no flagged streets and no gas-lamps. There was archery on the village greens, maypole dancing, feasts in the inns (often in control of the Church), but no cafes, no restaurants, as tea, coffee, cocoa had not yet been brought to England, for in all ages, from the Stone Age unto this day, man is a creature ever seeking diversion and must have amusement and recreation. It was a world of village stocks (as still may be seen at Poulton and Woodplumpton in the Fylde) for rogues and rascals and drunkards, and the ducking-stool by which noisy quarrelsome women and domestic viragos were soused in cold water to quieten their hot tongues (there used to be one on the stream at Breck Road, Poulton), and the pillory, a public post, like a cross, with holes for the arms, to which offenders were bound, sometimes having their ears cut off as well, and still more cruel punishments, horrible tortures, in dark, foul dungeons, as the rack on which men were stretched till their legs and arms were almost torn off, and the thumbscrew, and the branding of criminals (even only for small thefts) with hot irons, or burning out their eyes, or cutting off hands, and women's breasts (it makes one shudder to think of it), roasting people to death at the stake, and other terrible things we will not mention, for the criminal laws were inhuman in those days. Let those who say we have

not progressed ponder over the difference between the fifteenth century and ours, for now, thanks to Christianity and education, we seek not so much to punish criminals as to reform them.

It was, also, this time of the Middle Ages (as it's called), the transition period between ancient barbarism and modern civilisation—a world of knights in armour, and tournaments where they tilted at one another on horseback (there were no football matches to go to then), of soldiers, bowmen, with bows and arrows, arbalests (or cross-bows—a gentleman named Higson, at Crossbow Cottage, near Ashton in Windmill Land, has a collection of these old weapons and uses one for bird shooting), of pikemen—an old ballad mentions the lads of Pilling with pikes at the Battle of Flodden Field—for gunpowder and rifles had not yet been invented—of mangonels, which were big slings for casting huge stones (before cannon and cannon balls were known), a world of pack-horses, and pedlars (such as the merry " Autolycus " in Shakespeare's " Winter's Tale "), of paid Court fools and travelling jesters, in motley garb, wearing a cap to which jingling bells were attached (as in Shakespeare's plays, and like " Jack Point " in Gilbert and Sullivan's comic opera), and of mendicant friars and licensed beggars wandering along the green lanes from village to village.

It was a world seemingly vastly different from our world to-day, full of romance to us, chiefly because of its remoteness and unfamiliarity. Yet could those folks of that day come and see our world to-day, with its engines and flying machines, they would think it far more marvellous and romantic than their day, yet much the same world in heart and soul, with its struggles and strifes, its loving and hating, its aims, ambitions, and dreams. And all about it, as around us, the bonny hills and vales of England, the wild mountains and fertile plains, the green hedges and the flowered gardens, the woodlands and the streams, and the water wheels and windmills, and over all the same golden sun by day, and by night the same silver moon and stars as shine around our globe.

TRADITIONS OF MARTON MERE.

Concerning our own district, this particular part of Lancashire in which it is our lot to play our part in the divine drama of human evolution, if there had been any "Blackpool Gazette and Herald" in the thirteenth century, and we could go to the Public Library and turn over its bound volumes of back numbers of seven hundred years ago, we should find many interesting accounts of the doings in the Fylde. But as there are no old newspapers to search, we have to get our information from ancient documents, such as Church registers, legal reports and records of disputes and trials about estates and boundaries, "dry" stuff to the general reader, who likes, and quite humanly, his information served up picturesquely and piquantly, yet fascinating to the antiquarian or to the imaginative student who can conjure a drama or romance from a line in an old parish register or from a memorial brass or tombstone, or an old will or legal document.

In the year 1233, William Pincarne, Lord of Warrington, one of the Butler family by marriage, granted to the Abbot of Deulacres (Staffordshire), the right to get turf in "Angelmoss, and wash sheep in Biscopham mere" (this must have been the low-lying district between Bispham Church and the Wyre, but the "mere," wherever it was, is gone now). About the same time (see Fishwick's "History of Bispham"), there is mention of a right of way from "Little Laton" (Layton) to a footpath between Staining and Carleton, also of a ditch, or dyke, "of Cecile"—Cecilie de Laton, the mistress of Staining Hall, near Marton Mere, which at this time extended near to the Hall, and had a watermill on the stream issuing from its northern end (in the direction of Poulton).

There is a legend that on moonlight nights a mermaid used to come up from the sea, by the connecting dyke (shown on the old map of 1622—p. 39—as also on Bowen's map of the Fylde in 1751) to the Mere. The late Rev. W. Bulpit, a worthy antiquarian gleaner, in his "Historical Notes on the Fylde," tells

the story of an evil spirit that haunted the woods round the Mere in the days of the Ancient Britons. Then a Christian priest cast the evil spirit into the lake, where it took the form of a water-snake or conger eel. In the time of the Danes, the serpent, or dragon, of the Mere got free somehow—the priest hadn't done his job thoroughly—and gobbled up sheep and even children when it got the chance. These stories of dragons may be dim traditions of the time when crocodiles were found in the lakes and rivers of Britain. The tale goes on to say that Grim, the priest of Kilgrimol (that's the name of the place where now is St. Annes-on-the-Sea) made an oatmeal cake, and marked it with a cross. Then he cooked a nice collop of bacon, put it on top of the cake, and laid it on the bank of the Mere at night. The big water-snake smelling the bacon came out of the water and swallowed the cake and bacon. But alas! for that sinful snake. The holy cross marked on the cake caused it to stick in the beast's throat, and he began to choke. In his suffocating agony, he plunged into the Mere, where, not being choked enough to die, yet unable to get the obstacle out of his throat, he still lives a miserable sort of invalid life, sometimes rolling about so much in the agonies of everlasting indigestion that his contortions cause a swell on the water. It would be a kindness if some of the gentlemen who go shooting wild duck and other fowl on the Mere would give the poor old snake a shot to put him out of his pain when they see the waves on the Mere caused by his writhing.

Marton Mere is said to be so deep that the bottom has never been sounded, and there is a saying, "as deep as Marton Mere," applied to people who are profoundly wise or cunning.

The King John who signed Magna Charta was Lord of Lancaster, and there is a tradition that while dwelling at Lancaster Castle he used to visit Staining Hall to see Geoffrey the Crossbowman, a gentleman renowned for his skill with the crossbow, a weapon used in war before guns were invented. This story is very likely true, for old documents show that John

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gave grants of land in Hackensall and Hambleton (Over Wyre) to Geoffrey the Crossbowman. The way Prince John would come from Lancaster, the old road from the top of Newton Drive to Staining, is still called " the king's way " by old inhabitants.

Verily it is a pity that there were no newspapers in the thirteenth century, for there was an opportunity for a reporter to have given a thrilling description of a remarkable conflict at Poulton, with startling lines on the contents bill to this effect :—

FIGHT AT POULTON.

SIR ADAM BANNASTRE THRASHES THE PRIOR OF LANCASTER. COMBAT ROUND THE MARKET CROSS.

Sir Adam Bannastre, of Newton-le-Willows, owned land in Poulton and Singleton district, and he probably had some residence here, as the name figures in Fylde patronymics (see Porter's " History of the Fylde "). Now the monks of the Priory of St. Mary's, Lancaster, when visiting Staining and neighbourhood, were in the habit of crossing over the land of the Bannastres, and Sir Adam, who was a choleric fellow, didn't like it, said he wouldn't allow it, and swore he'd give a basting to such monks as he caught trespassing on his domain. The monks defied the knight, and there was a feud. One day, in the year 1276, Sir Adam, hearing that Ralph, the Prior of Lancaster, and his retinue, were at Staining, got ready to tackle the monks on the return journey. He mustered his friends and followers, and, he on horseback, Sir Adam chased the pious crowd along the lane to Poulton Market Place, where the monks made a bit of a stand near the Market Cross, but they fell before the fury of Sir Adam, who grabbed Ralph the prior, and cuffed him, while Sir Adam's attendants dealt similarly with the monks in the prior's train. Then Sir Adam locked the prior up in a house at Thornton. The King (Edward I.) was informed of this outrage on the prior, and Sir Adam went into hiding. Eventually Sir Adam was slain in a similar fight at Preston.

Fight between Sir Adam Bannastre and the Prior of Lancaster at Poulton.

Other knights had a habit of taking the law into their own hands in those days. There are records of a dispute between another Fylde squire, Sir William Clifton, and the abbots of Vale Royal, respecting the tithes of Kirkham, in 1337. Sir William stopped the Rector when collecting the tithes; he also invaded the Church with his retainers and interrupted the service; and then, a few days later, meeting the clerk of Vale Royal in Preston, he pulled the monk's nose and thrashed him in the public street. Those were jolly lively times, weren't they? Oh, if we only had a picture film or some photographs of the actual incidents of those days—wouldn't it be interesting?

It should be added that the power of the Church brought Sir William Clifton to his knees. He apologised for his rough conduct, and paid a fine for his frolic.

There is also record of a lady who combatted a prior, showing that even in those early times there were women who stood up for their rights. When all South Shore and its dunes was part of Layton Hawes the Prior of Lytham built a house near Squires Gate, on what the people clamed was common land. Dame Butler, of Layton, called on the tenants to assert their rights, and three hundred men pulled down the prior's house and broke down a wayside cross near the shore. The prior fled, and took legal action against Dame Butler and her followers in the year 1532. During the trial one witness mentioned that in his time two miles of pasture and the churchyard of Kilgrimol (between Squires Gate and St. Annes) had been washed away by the sea, as also the village of Waddum Thorp and the pasture land in Ribble Estuary that to-day is the great desolate Horse Bank at low water. The cross was re-erected as the boundary cross, showing the limit of the monastery lands. The cross is long gone, but the locality is still known as Cross Slack, near old Cross Slack Farm (close to Gillett's Crossing on the railway between South Shore and St. Annes).

VIII.

THE FIFTEENTH AND SIXTEENTH CENTURIES.

For nearly two hundred years (after 1416) there is no mention of the "black pool," nor of the few folks living about it, in any records, though there must have been some note of them in old Bispham Church registers and documents, now lost or destroyed, for "the pool" was in Bispham parish, and Bispham old church (long since demolished and succeeded by two others on its site) was the mother church of Blackpool district, and the only place in the locality for the weddings, christenings, and burials, of which the story of mankind is an endless continuation, the tale of generations coming and going. But the earliest surviving Bispham registers only date back to the year 1599 (and are not complete even from then).

During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries there was war between England and Scotland, and the names of Wallace and Bruce battled into fame. There was discontent in England owing to the heavy taxation, and the priest, John Ball was preaching for justice to the poor, justice for all, and Wat Tyler headed a rising in Kent. At the same time playing cards were designed for the first time in France (1392) to amuse the invalid king, and there is the source of all our whist drives of to-day—cards came into the world, or into fashion (for I believe the gipsies used them before that), about the time our "pool" is first mentioned in history. Is it not a significant coincidence? Also about this time the gipsies, that strange, wandering race, first appeared in Europe and England —this corroborates the opinion that playing cards came with the gipsies. Occult students hold that playing cards are of long antiquity, embodying in their signs and symbols the secret Ancient Religion that is the root of all the creeds. If so, one may infer that

gambling is as old as religion, as undoubtedly " fortune-telling " is.

The " Dick Whittington " who has become the hero of a nursery classic and a principal character in pantomimes was Lord Mayor of London when the Butlers, of Rawcliffe Manor, became possessors of the black " pool " in 1416.

GUNPOWDER AND PRINTING.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries there were inventions, reformations, revolutions, some gradual, some sudden, developments, and evolutions, that were shaping the nation and society towards the conditions into which we of to-day were to be born.

There had been plagues and decimations of the population, owing to insanitary conditions (the whole population of all England at this time was less than that of Lancashire alone to-day), and the thing that was to increase the slaughtering powers of the barbarity of war, namely, gunpowder, was invented in 1340 by a German monk (singular that a professing follower of Christ should introduce the work of the devil), and in 1346, at the Battle of Crecy, in France, we find small cannons or bombards used, the first artillery, but no muskets nor rifles as yet, for the foot soldiers still had only bows and arrows (cross-bows).

Clocks were coming into use. In the earlier ages of the world man had to measure time by water-clocks (a stream of water trickling from one vessel into another in a certain time), and by candles, each burning so long, and other ways, as well as sun-dials (such as the one you may see in the little park at the South Shore end of Blackpool Promenade), which were common in churchyards and the gardens of the gentry. As you know, the sun-dial shows the time by the shadow that the sun casts from the upright triangle fixed in the centre of the face on which the hours are marked. Of course, you could only tell the time when the sun was shining. Sun-dials were no use in the night, and, obviously, you could not carry them about in your pocket. Watches are certainly much handier,

and, if we may make a word, much " pocketier." There are ancient sun-dials in several Windmill Land churchyards—St. Michael's, Woodplumpton, Stalmine, etc., and there is one fixed in the wall over the door of the old Church at Pilling.

There had been another invention destined to exercise an even greater, and certainly a much better, influence than gunpowder in the world; indeed, in the end, sooner or later, to vanquish gunpowder and its grim work by creating goodwill amongst the nations and ending war—the printing press, first made in Europe, as was gunpowder, by a German, John Gutenberg, about the year 1430 (the date is uncertain). The first printing machine, a very crude thing contrasted with the marvellously elaborate presses of to-day, in England, was set up by Caxton, in London, in the year 1435. Before the invention of printing, books were all written by hand, one by one, not done hundreds at a time, as now, and so were scarce and costly, from £20 to £50 each. During the fifteenth century the Wars of the Roses—between the rival Royal families and their adherents of Lancaster and York—raged in England, but they did not affect the Fylde. The common people kept out of this conflict, which was waged between aristocrat factions.

Columbus discovered America in 1492, and the " wooden walls of Old England " (now superseded by ironclads) began in the first English two-deck warship (1506). Sir Thomas Moore wrote his vision of " Utopia " (1516)—not the first, nor, we may be sure, the last, of such dreams of the Ideal Commonwealth, for the idea persists in our time, and Plato, a thousand years before Moore, and others since, had let their fancy revel in similar alluring pictures of a perfect clockwork world. Martin Luther (another German) had begun the Protestant Reformation, renouncing and defying the Church of Rome (1517). Largely because of this Reformation and the resultant theologic conflict, the English monasteries were broken up by King Henry VIII., whose religious zeal danced at the tail of his polygamic proclivities, and whose reforming fervour was led by the necessity of

replenishing the reckless Royal Exchequer at the expense of plundered abbeys. All the old abbeys, whose ruins are now objects of interest to the tourist, such as Whalley, Furness, and Cockersand, were dissolved, Lancashire protesting in a rising called the Pilgrimage of Grace (1538), many Fylde men doubtless being in it, which ended in the execution of Abbot Paslew, of Whalley, and others.

In 1519, Magellan was the first man to sail round the world, opening up new routes and countries for commerce.

Tyndale's Bible, the first great storehouse and sample of the ripened English speech grown from many diverse roots, was published in 1525, a great influence, not only spreading the Gospel, but shaping our language down to the present day. The first English Prayer-book was compiled in 1562.

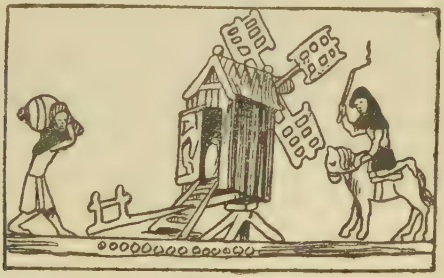
Shakespeare was born in 1564, and there also came upon the scene the other Elizabethan dramatists and poets and story-writers—Marlowe, Ben Jonson, Spenser, and others, with their masques, interludes, romances; Hakluyt's true tales of adventurous British voyagers, Francis Bacon, and other philosophers, as well as tobacco, brought, along with potatoes, by Sir Walter Raleigh, from America. It seems difficult to imagine that till Shakespeare's time nobody in England ever saw a pipe of tobacco or smoked a cigarette, or had a potato for dinner. Yet such is the fact.

As in our time, and in all times, till the nation grows good enough and wise enough to prevent destitution, there were poor people and beggars in the land in Shakespeare's day. In 1547 there was a law which branded vagrants, with a red-hot iron, on the hand (you may see an old branding-iron at Lancaster Castle), and anyone who caught them could keep them as a slave for two years. If they ran away they were further branded with a big " S " (for slave), and for a third like offence they were hanged. The law got a little more humane in 1575, when Houses of Correction were established. (The old prison at Preston is

still called the House of Correction.) A hundred and fifty years later " work houses " were established for the very poor. The old Fylde workhouse at Kirkham was built in 1726. There is a big new workhouse there now, opened in 1907. It should be also said, on the other hand, of those old times when beggars were branded, that persons refusing to do their duty to their unfortunate neighbour by not contributing to the parish poor-box could be put in jail.

OLD WOODEN WINDMILLS.

About this time (1560) the old wooden windmills, "peg mills" (like the one at Warton, near Lytham, and the one that used to be at Hambleton) must have been



An Early Type of Windmill
(From a 14th Century Manuscript).

working. The windmill that used to stand on Hoo Hill, Little Layton, was in existence and must have been working for years. Windmills, for a hundred years, had been coming into extensive use in England. The early ones were simple affairs, built of wood like a big box set on a stout central upright post, called a peg, with a tripod, or three legs, supporting it. The whole structure was turned round by a beam, with a big handle at the end (see our illustration copied from an old manuscript). Later a cart-wheel was substituted for the handle.

The windmill that used to stand on Hoo Hill (now Westcliffe Drive), Little Layton, on the old highway from Poulton to Layton, is mentioned in the record of a law-suit, in the year 1583, by the Fleetwoods (this family, evidently of an annexing and acquiring disposition, seems, as has been remarked before, to have frequently been in litigation about property, for Bispham records show other disputes over attempts of one of the Fleetwoods to enclose a portion of Layton Hawes, then grass and dunes) against John Massey, owner of Hoo Hill Mill and the land on which it was built, and of Carlteton Windmill, which stood where now is Dick's Mill Terrace, on the road from Carleton Lane Ends to Poulton. This John Massey also built Whinney Heys Hall, about 1570, or maybe earlier, and it was tenanted by his daughter, Mrs. Edward Veale. Coins of Queen Elizabeth's time have been found near this old hall, now a farm (mostly modernised) when ploughing, also a signet ring. The quarrel between the Fleetwoods and the Masseys and other people of Carleton was fierce and bitter. The Fleetwoods complained that the tails and manes of their horses on Layton Hawes had been spitefully cut by some of the defendants. The farmers held meetings to combine against the Fleetwoods, who, however, got hold of the land (they appear to have been lucky adepts at the game) and held it for two centuries, when they sold it.

Belief in witchcraft was common at this time, and many old women were put to death for alleged dealings with Satan and his imps—the English bishops made witchcraft the excuse for burning Joan of Arc at the stake in France—for though the country was progressing in inventions, arts, trade and commerce, and literature, it was still very ignorant and superstitious on the theological side. People believed that the devil appeared and made bargains with human beings. They believed also in all sorts of hobgoblins and spectres, and many learned men were as credulous in these silly fearful matters as the unlettered and ignorant. There were many supposed witches in

Lancashire. Of one who lived in the Fylde, at Singleton, by name Meg Shelton, we shall speak later.

Glass windows and chimneys came into use during this period, but only for the gentry. There had also been development in the matter of apparel. The men wore doublets, cloaks, long hose, broad hats and long hair, the women stomachers and kirtles, embroidered as they could afford. The working-class women wore plain gowns and cloaks.

THE SEA-TOMBED VILLAGE.

About this time (1570) there came sea-flood destruction upon a little village which tradition says used to stand where now the tide ebbs and flows off Norbreck, three miles north of the " black pool," and where there would only be a few fishermen's huts in those days, for Blackpool was not yet on the map.

This vanished village, according to Thornber (Blackpool's first historian, who published his book in 1837) was called Singleton Thorpe, and there was a hall called Gingle Hall. In his romance, called " Pennystone " (a scarce little book, out of print), Thornber, drawing on his imagination, describes the village and tells how it was submerged by a great sudden inundation of the sea, perhaps due to an earthquake, or subterranean volcanic disturbance. One dawn the sun rose bright, as it had risen for years, on Singleton Thorpe. There came a gigantic onrushing wave and the place was no more. The sunset waters rolled where the village stood that morn. The alarmed inhabitants fled from the destroying billow, but a few were caught in the flood and drowned. All that could be seen of the village was a big rock near the inn, to which huge stone travellers used to tether their horses by an iron ring. Thus tattles tradition, while superstition says that on tempestuous nights in the roar of the sea can be heard the phantom racket of phantom carousers at the buried hostelry by Pennystone Rock.

But whether swept away by an extraordinary tide, or slowly swallowed, bit by bit, by the encroaching sea, there is evidence that there was once a village on the spot.

In the year 1792, according to Mr. Hutton, who visited Blackpool and wrote a book about it (as mentioned in a previous chapter), an exceptionally low ebb-tide revealed a number of tree trunks, relics of a submerged forest, near Pennystone.

A hundred years later, in 1893, at a very low ebb of the tide, some Blackpool gentlemen, including the late Mr. Halstead, a Blackpool editor, and Mr. Ben Bowman, went out on the sands with picks and spades to find traces, if any, of the submerged village. They disinterred old fallen trees, indicating a buried forest. Digging further, they discovered the rafters of a large room, a doorpost, and lintel, and the foundations of what they were certain was a wall.

The late Mr. Chew, of Granville Road, an ardent geologist, who used to go poking about the shore with a hammer and a magnifying-glass, once showed me a curious old urn and a stone head and face, rudely carved, with marks on the forehead like hieroglyphics, and a stone candle-socket in the shape of a lamb's face, all found in the clay cliffs (near Uncle Tom's). Perhaps this last relic, similar to the old stone lamb-head candle-sockets used specially at Christmas (there is one at St. John's College, Oxford) may have come from the vanished Pennystone Village.

As we have seen in previous chapters, Nature, through the ages, is ever altering the surface of the earth. The change is always going on, generally gradually and calmly, sometimes suddenly, violently. Land we now walk on, as Marton Moss and Pilling Moss, was once sea-bed, while land on which people once lived is now sea-bottom.

In our own generation we have watched the sea eating away the Fylde coast. There are many people alive who remember when the Blackpool Cliffs extended almost half-a-mile further out than to-day beyond the inn called "Uncle Tom's." We can see

Uncle Tom's Cabin, North Shore, about 1880-1890.
From an old picture in the possession of Mr. Harold Pearson, Bank Hey Street, Blackpool.

for ourselves that but for the sea barrier in construction at North Shore the ocean would ere long be on the Blackpool-Fleetwood tram track.

The evidence of the Coast Erosion Committee, 1911, shows that off Bispham the sea has gained nearly 25 yards in 17 years, while at Norbreck the loss of land is almost three yards every year. It is clear that the sea is encroaching on that part of the coast, which is where the traditional village of Singleton Thorpe used to stand. Supposing the sea has been gaining at the rate of two or three yards a year, it must now be half-a-mile further in than it was when Singleton Thorpe was submerged about three hundred and eighty years ago. This distance and the rate of encroachment tally with the traditional site of the vanished village.

In his fascinating geologic study, " The Evolution of a Coast-line," Mr. William Ashton demonstrates that since the time of the Romans the sea has greatly encroached on the Fylde coast. South of Blackpool the land is gaining a little. The St. Annes beach in 1610 was a mile further inland than it is to-day. Blown sand has made the land on which St. Annes stands.

Three hundred years ago, the beach may have been near the village still called " Blown Sand," or " Blowing Sands," on the western edge of Marton Moss. Between South Shore and Fairhaven the land has gained a lot seawards. Our sandhills have all been formed during the last three hundred years. But north of Blackpool the sea is getting more inland. In 1908, a man said he could recollect cattle grazing on a field where now is North Pier (erected in 1863). Robert Bickerstaffe said he used to see tree-trunks off the Central Pier at low water, about 1870, where now the sea never ebbs, but is always five or six yards deep.

Off Lytham are sea-buried pastures. There is a tradition of Kilgrimol Church—(from " Kil," Celtic for church; " grim," a Norse name; and " meol," sandhill) on the coast about St. Annes. Kilgrimol is the old name of the Lytham (and St. Annes) Common.

Mr. Ashton argues, and with all reason, that in the Roman days the Fylde coastline was a couple of miles further west than it is to-day, and that there was then a port (Portus Setantii) shown on an old Roman map three miles out from the present site of Fleetwood, at the mouth of the Lune, of which the River Wyre was then a tributary.

There can be no doubt that where now the sea rolls off Norbreck was an old inhabited beach, and tradition is probably correct about the buried village, of which only Pennystone Rock was left as a memorial.

THE SPANISH ARMADA AND ROSSALL.

Six miles north, up the coast from the "black pool," in the sixteenth century, was Rossall Grange, a family mansion standing solitary near the beach, with a few farms and cottages in the neighbourhood and Bispham Church to the south. Rossall Grange was the home of the Allen family, who also owned Todderstaffe Hall (now a farm) near Singleton, kin to the Abbot of Deulacres (in Staffordshire). They were a Catholic family, who intermarried with the Hesketh's of Mains Hall, and the Westbys of Mowbreck Hall, likewise Catholic families, who have always been numerous in the Fylde. When King Henry VIII. dissolved the monasteries and their properties (Rossall belonging to the Abbots of Deulacres), one of the Fleetwood family purchased Rossall from the money-seeking monarch, and in the year 1583 Edmund Fleetwood, desiring possession of the Grange, evicted the widow Allen and her two daughters, who went to their relative Cardinal Allen, at Rheims in France.

Tradition says that the dispossessed widow, when being turned out of her old home—which neither the king nor anybody else had the right to take from her—spoke a bitter prophecy of retribution to Fleetwood, "You rob me of my home, and God shall rob you of heirs. No Fleetwood male child shall ever succeed to your estate. Henceforth Rossall Grange shall be a heirless hall."

Strangely enough, the Fleetwood family never had an heir in the direct line of descent, and only continued through the husbands of the daughters.

Cardinal Allen, a brilliant scholar, wrote books advocating the Catholic cause and denouncing Queen Elizabeth, the daughter of King Henry VIII., asserting that she had no right to the throne. Elizabeth, of course, stood for the Protestant faith. The antagonism was about creeds, and it was all very wicked, very pitiful, and, above all, very unchristian. The conflicting sects did devilish things in the name of God. Their followers tortured and burnt one another to death. No really religious man, or true believer in Christ, will ever seek to punish another for not believing exactly as he does, and it is a most foolish, as well as unrighteous thing, to squabble about your creed, or to try to impose it on other people. Tolerant fellowship is a holier thing than sectarian strife, and " live and let live " is as good a motto for religion as for business.

It is said that Cardinal Allen was instrumental in urging the Catholic King of Spain to set forth and attempt to subdue Protestant England. Spain and England had long been at loggerheads on other matters than creed. Captain Francis Drake, Captain Hawkins, and other mariners, more or less buccaneers, out for treasure and spoil, and incidentally opening markets and colonising for Britain, had had many encounters with Spanish ships on the Spanish Main, and the King of Spain had protested about these attacks and fights. Very likely if his own men had come off best he would have said nothing. But the plucky British sailors generally had the luck and the victory, and that hurt the pride of Spain, which at this time was lord of the seas, the supreme naval power in the world.

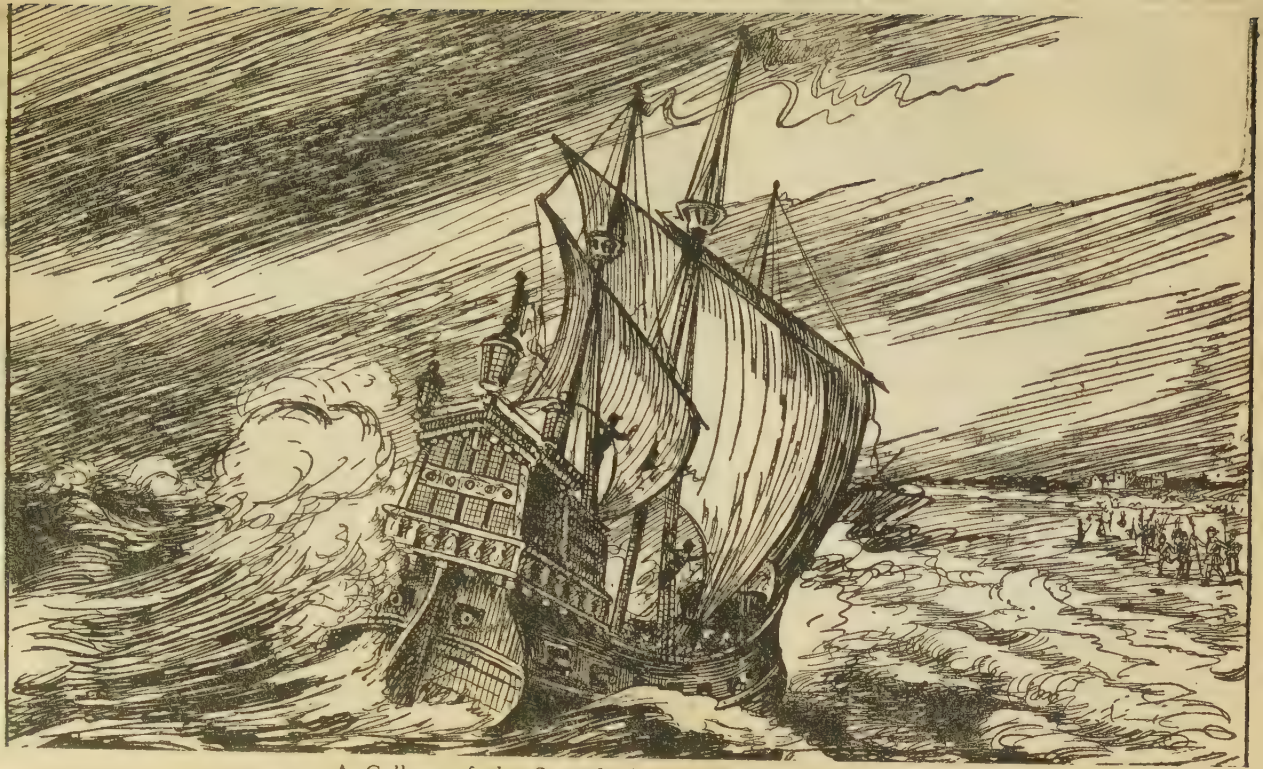
So King Philip of Spain resolved to try the invasion of England. It was a bad day for him when he made that decision. However, he assembled all the might and glory of his fleet and set forth. You will have read how Drake, with his daring little

vessels, set upon the huge, pompous Spanish galleons in the English Channel and put them to confusion. Then came Fate or Providence, whatever you choose to call it—the evolution of destiny by the mysterious powers behind the scenes of the drama of history—to the salvation of England and the tragic discomfiture of Spain. There arose a great gale that played havoc with the naval majesty of Spain, blowing the grand galleons northward, up the coast of Scotland, scattering them and driving them ashore on the rocks, and thousands of poor Spanish sailors, victims of the ambitions of kings and the quarrels of theologians, went back home no more.

One of the Spanish galleons, helpless before the gale, came drifting past the Isle of Man and over the Irish Sea, towards the " black pool " on the Fylde coast, then, as you'll remember, a long stretch of cliff and dune, with only a few huts here and there—no Blackpool Promenade, not even any Blackpool. The great galleon ran aground on a sandbank near Rossall Point, and was there left by the receding tide. The farmers and labourers of Rossall district had no doubt heard of the Armada, for beacon-fires on all our hills—as Macaulay describes in his famous poem

" Till Skiddaw saw the fire that burned
On Gaunt's embattled pile;
And the red glare of Skiddaw roused the burghers of Carlisle "—

(" Gaunt's embattled pile " is poetic for " Lancaster ") had warned the country (no telegraph wires in those days, so big fires on mountain tops were lit as signals). The Rossall men, arming themselves with pikes and pitchforks and a musket or two, and led by Squire Fleetwood, cautiously approached the stranded enemy. The Spaniards fired a cannon, which caused the Rossall men to dodge behind the sandhills for safety. Two cannon-balls, it is said, struck Rossall Grange, the abode of the Fleetwoods. Whenever the Rossall men tried to get near the galleon, they were met by a volley from the Spanish gunners, for the earliest crude muskets were now in use, and they had



A Galleon of the Spanish Armada Stranded off Rossall.

to duck and hide. Then there was the cannon. Even the bravest had more sense than attempt to rush that cannon's mouth.

When the tide rose the Spanish galleon floated and sailed away, to the disappointment of the Rossall men, who did not like losing such a rich prize.

Tradition says that the two big round stones at the entrance of the headmaster's house at Rossall School are the two cannon-balls fired by the Spanish ship. The remains of the old Rossall Grange have been covered by the encroaching sea, but the present Rossall School is near its site. The Fleetwoods, who took Rossall Hall Grange from the Allens, intermarried with the Hesketh, of Rufford (near Southport), and the family took the name of Hesketh-Fleetwood. In the 17th century a new hall was built, further away from the sea, and in 1843 this hall, generously given by Sir Peter Hesketh-Fleetwood, was converted into the present renowned Rossall School.

IX.

THE CHRISTENING OF BLACKPOOL.

Thus, by the magic of thought, the most wonderful mystery in the world, for without it man would know nothing of either creation or Creator—thought, by which man knows the present, pictures the past, and visions the future—we have traversed the tale of the world and the beginnings of Blackpool from the dim, ancient traditions to the clearer records of more recent history.

So far we have seen how, out of an immense fiery nebula, our sun and its planets, of which our earth is one, came into being—according to Science, which tells not so much a different as a more detailed story of the origin of the world and man than the Bible story, which is true in its broad summarisation for " in the beginning was God "—and how our globe after countless ages became habitable for the first men, and how relics and remains found in our locality show our progression from the Stone Age people to the time of the mingled race of Britons, Romans, Saxons, Danes, and Normans who dwelt in England and our Fylde country when the " black pool " is first mentioned in an old record. I am giving you these great panoramic surveys of space and time, and events contemporaneous with the birth and development of Blackpool, because I want you always to keep in mind that out of these growths, advances, transitions, our Blackpool has evolved, and, further, because all these long-vanished generations of men, with their old primitive tools and weapons, their progress in dress from nakedness and beast-skins to woven cloth and gowns, and hose, and sandals, and boots, with their old creeds, and songs, and tales, their " morality " plays (early dramas), first started by the Church, their old games and graceful dances, mostly of religious origin, their sports, their " feasts," " wakes," Rush-bearings (the occasion of taking fresh clean rushes to

strew on the floors of the churches once a year), their Maypole dances, Yuletide festivities, and old Christmas carols (such as the Saxon one, " Here we come a-wassailing ") have had an influential part in moulding and preparing the town you live in and forming the great social and industrial environment of your individual life. The religious doctrines, the laws affecting person and property, the books, the poems, the romances, the plays, the histories, the philosophies, the discoveries, the inventions, the wars, the invasions, the rebellions, the fights for freedom and liberty of conscience, of generations gone, have made this town of Blackpool what it is to-day for your heritage. In one word, thought has made Blackpool, thought the invisible, thought the mystery, thought, stumbling often, straying much, but in the main going upright and forward, always sooner or later getting back to the one right track, the inevitable right road of man's pilgrimage from the slime to the stars, —Thought, the unseen, has created the Blackpool we see. First was God's thought, providing material for the world. Then man's thought (born of God's thought) shaping it for his service and development.

BISPHAM CHURCH.

So comes the seventeenth century, and with it the first visible beginnings of Blackpool, simple, humble beginnings, unplanned, unspeculative, merely the circumstances or desires that caused a few folks to build houses near the shore, probably from the inland villages, Layton, Marton, Bispham, Poulton, mostly likely sons marrying and quitting the paternal roof to set up houses of their own. A few huts were erected near the " black pool " (somewhere about where the Foxhall and Wellington Hotels now stand, and down what is now Chapel Street and in the direction of Revoe). Two or three of these dwellings must have been erected before this time. But now they are numerous enough to give the locality a name. The mother church of the district, Bispham, as is but right and natural, gives the name. The villagers

round the " black pool " are christened, married, and buried at Bispham Church, there being none other near (Poulton Church being the next nearest,—but the " pool " is in Bispham Parish, not Poulton), and it is in Bispham Church registers that the full name, " Black poole," occurs for the first time in all history.

Appropriately enough, the first reference to Blackpool in the Bispham Church registers is in regard to a christening. It was the christening of a baby girl. Blackpool, you see, chivalrously started with " ladies first." It was in the year 1602, and as an exact copy of the lines that were written in that old register over three hundred years ago may interest you, here it is, with the old spelling :—

" September,"
" Ellen, daughter of Thomas Cowban de blackpoole XXIJnd."

That was September 22nd, and the christening of little Ellen Cowban was the christening of Blackpool. I wonder if she ever married and had children, and whether any of her descendants are alive to-day. We might have found out from subsequent old registers. But, alas! from the year 1602 to 1632 they are missing, lost. No record of any birth, wedding, or christening for thirty years, and there are other big gaps after 1632.

You will notice that the baptism entry quoted says " de " blackpoole, using the French word " de " (which means " of "), showing that the Norman-French speech still influenced our language.

You will also see that the parish clerk spelt " blackpoole " with a small " b " (as well as with a final " e "). I guess he would use the largest capitals he could make if he could see the place now, when Blackpool, originally a small fold in Bispham Parish, is a municipality in which Bispham is incorporated, the child having swallowed the mother.

In the Bispham registers for 1635 (November), there is the baptism of "Matthew, sonne of Mr. John Veale, of the Whinheis" (that's "Whinney Heys," of course), and in September, 1634, of "William, the sonne of Ric. Warbreck, of the blackpoole."

You will further notice that the French "de" has now become our modern English "the," but the town is still spelt with a small "b."

But though Blackpool has now "a local habitation and a name," it does not figure on any Lancashire maps till a hundred years later.

THE FYLDE WITCH.

In the year 1602, when little Ellen, first recorded citizen of Blackpool, forerunner of all the breezy Blackpool girls who have enlivened and adorned a hundred generations, was christened at Bispham Church—and we are sure she would be a well-behaved baby during the sprinkling ceremony—William Shakespeare was acting in his own plays at the Globe Theatre, Southwark, London, and there had been discoveries in astronomy (by Kepler) and inventions, notably that of the stocking-loom (1589), which was very likely ascribed to the Evil One, as printing was, for in those times, amazingly superstitious and credulous, as well as producing such genius as Shakespeare's and Marlowe's and Ben Jonson's and the learning of Francis Bacon, scientist and essayist, clever inventions were usually put to the credit of Satan and the ingenious devisers of new machines accused of being in league with the devil, or "Old Nick," the name of a Scandinavian evil spirit introduced into Britain by the Danes—it survives in the name "Owd Nick's Watering Pot" on Parlick Pike, in the hills that border the Fylde to the east, as also in "Nickey Nook," a wild glen amongst the moorlands, twenty miles away.

There was a widespread belief in witchcraft at this time, and many women and men were put to death for that imaginary crime of "dealing with the devil," and by his wicked aid making spells to spoil

Meg Shelton, the Fylde Witch, sky-riding on a broomstick.

crops, turn milk sour, maim cattle, make people ill, raise tempests, and a hundred other malicious and destructive actions. They also anticipated aeroplanes by riding through the air on broomsticks. There were many supposed witches in Lancashire, and Meg Shelton, a woman living at Singleton village, was accounted one of them. Tradition tells many astonishing tales about this weird lady, who, if she were alive to-day, could assuredly earn a big income on the stage as a conjuror, to judge by the marvellous tricks it is said she performed. There is a tale that she used to get her milk cheap by going into a field where cows were grazing and milking them on the sly. If the farmer or any of his folks happened to come along, she would instantly transform her jug into a goose innocently waddling about the cow. One day, a farmer who had been watching her, aggravated at thus being tricked, gave the goose a kick, and lo! a shattered jug lay at his feet. On another occasion, the miller at Singleton saw Meg steal at dusk into the mill to help herself to the corn. He followed quickly, but when he got into the mill there was no old woman to be seen. Nothing but sacks of corn. The miller looked at the sacks. There were seven. Now he knew there were only six when he left the mill a few minutes before. "Old Meg's turned herself into a sack of corn to dodge me," said the miller to himself. He got a pitchfork and stuck it into the sacks of corn one after the other. When he dabbed it into the seventh sack there was a shriek, and the witch, with a bleeding arm, where the pitchfork had pierced it, ran out into the mill-yard, and, seizing a broom that stood at the door, she muttered some magic words, and sailed up into the sky on her sweeping steed.

Meg had the luck to escape arrest for witchcraft. She died a natural death, and is said to be buried under a boulder-stone in the old churchyard at bonnie Woodplumpton, a little hamlet a few miles from Singleton. The boulder-stone is certainly there, whatever may be beneath it. Tradition says that when

first Meg was buried, she scratched her way out of the grave. She was caught and buried again, and the second time she was fixed in the grave head downwards, so that if she tried to claw her way out she would have to mole through the earth to Australia, and, to make sure doubly that she did not get up any more, the big stone was laid over her. The Woodplumpton folks tell many tales about Meg, and say that if you walk round the gravestone three times and silently wish, and don't tell, your desire will be gratified.

OLD FAMILIES.

At this time, when Blackpool was first mentioned in Bispham Church registers, the following prominent families were living in the neighbourhood:—The Fleetwoods, Rossall Hall; the Butlers, Rawcliffe Hall; the Cliftons, Lytham Hall; the ffrances, Little Eccleston Hall; the Hesketh, Mains Hall (near Shard Bridge); the Leckonbys, Leckonby House, Great Eccleston; the Longworths, of St. Michael's Hall; the Parkers, of Bradkirk Hall (on the old highway—the old Roman track and Danes' pad—between Weeton and Kirkham); the Rigbys, Layton Hall (now a boarding establishment, Newton Drive, Blackpool); the Singletons, of Staining Hall; the Stanleys, of Great Eccleston Hall; the Tyldesleys, of Myerscough Hall (near Garstang—later they built the Fox Hall, at Blackpool); the Veales, at Whinney Heys Hall (this old hall and Layton Hall being the two nearest halls to Blackpool); the Westbys, of Mowbreck Hall (near Kirkham), and of Burn Hall (near Rossall). All these old halls have their tales and traditions of strange family events, and, of course, ghosts, especially Rawcliffe Hall, Main's Hall, whose barn was once an old Catholic chapel, and in whose walls are secret places—it is said Cardinal Allen hid here sometimes when visiting Rossall Hall and the authorities got wind of his presence in England, and Hackensall Hall (now a boarding establishment), the

structure being practically re-built by Richard and Ann Fleetwood, whose initials and the date may be seen on a stone tablet in the outer wall, as thus:—

F.
R. A.
God's Providence 1656.

The "whirligig of Time," as Shakespeare terms it, plays strange pranks with old families as well as with nations. They have their rise and decline. Many of those old Windmill Land families have died out or sunk into obscurity and their ancient mansions have been part demolished, mutilated, and turned into farms or holiday houses. Nothing abides. The history of this world is summed up in one word, "change." Unto every generation, in its journey, Father Time, like a railway porter, cries "All change!"

Some of the gentry just mentioned, whose families are now extinct, or absorbed in others, and whose names remain only in the nomenclature of Blackpool streets, such as Tyldesley Road and Rigby Road, near Fox Hall, once the abode of the Tyldesleys, were involved in the Civil War which afflicted England at this time, the reign of King Charles the First, son and successor of King James the First (who believed in witchcraft, and actually had certain women put to death for raising a storm to wreck his ship), in whose days we find a tax levied on the clergy to provide "horses and arms," an old record showing that the Vicar of Poulton was responsible for supplying "one musket" to the army, for though King Henry IV. of France in the year 1610 proposed a "grand design" to end wars and unite all the European nations in "a great Christian Commonwealth of peace"—thus anticipating our modern League of Nations by over 300 years—the world would not listen to the wise royal adviser, but kept on warring.

King James the First, on his way from Scotland, through Lancaster, to Hoghton Tower (Preston), stayed a night at Myerscough Lodge, near St. Michael's-on-Wyre—the old hall is gone now, though a few relics of it remain in the modern house on its site—and was entertained by Edward Tyldesley, grandfather of the man who built Fox Hall, Blackpool.

During the reign of Charles the First, king and people got to loggerheads and England was split into two contending parties, one for the king, and the other against him, and there was war between the two, Civil War, the saddest sort of war, men of the same nation, the same great family, fighting one another. The leader of the Parliamentarians, as the king's opponents were called, was Oliver Cromwell. The trouble was about the king wanting all his own way, and not a good way, either, wanting to overrule and override Parliament, and Parliament would not let him. The king's side was called the Royalist Party, and some of the Fylde gentry supported it, amongst them being Thomas Clifton, the Squire of Lytham, and Alexander Rigby, of Layton Hall, and Captain Thomas Singleton, of Staining. The Civil War went on for seven years, 1642 to 1649, and ended in the defeat of the Royalists and the execution of the king. During those seven years there were many battles, but, fortunately, no fighting in the Fylde, though Thomas Clifton (made captain) and Alexander Rigby helped to raise a regiment and got recruits from these parts, perhaps one or two from the little village growing round the "black pool." Records show that Captain Clifton commandeered provisions and fodder from the farmers in 1642.

THE CIVIL WAR AND THE FYLDE.

During this war, the old windmill (now a ruin) at Carr Hill, on the Preston Road, Kirkham, was used as a look-out tower by the Royalist party. In the year 1643, Colonel Thomas Tyldesley (father of

the Tyldesley who afterwards built Foxhall), along with Lord Molyneux, of Liverpool, retreating from Liverpool before a Parliamentary force under Colonel Ashton, of Preston, crossed the Ribble and made towards Kirkham. Colonel Molyneux occupied Clifton village, while Colonel Tyldesley went on to Kirkham. The day after the arrival news came that Colonel Ashton was in hot pursuit, and presently the look-out on the windmill saw his regiment coming along. All the women and children were ordered indoors, in anticipation of a battle, but as the advancing Parliamentary force drew nigh, the Royalist leaders decided not to give fight, but made another quick retreat to Weeton, so that when Colonel Ashton and his troops got to Kirkham they found no foe to face. They followed the Royalists to Poulton and thence towards Garstang, but, not overtaking them, turned back to Preston. The Royal forces had crossed the Wyre to Stalmine and Pilling and Cockerham, but they returned and plundered the Fylde for food. That must have been rather an exciting day in the Fylde. The peaceful farmers would be sick of these military marauders.

At Staining old Hall Farm there is a cannon ball which was dug up in the barn. It may have been left by the Royalist troops, who perhaps halted there for refreshments on their way to Poulton.

The late Mr. Chew (of Granville Road) had an old thirty-six pounder, found at Poulton, and supposed to be one of the shots fired at the church by Oliver Cromwell, who, according to popular tradition, seems to have spent almost his whole life in planting cannon-balls for antiquarians to dig up, for there is hardly an old church in the British Isles that does not claim to have been a target for the Puritan general's artillery.

The Royalists and Parliamentarians seemed loth, or unable, to get to grips in the Fylde. In this same year, 1643, a Spanish vessel was seen off Rossall

Point. As it seemed to be anchored there, the people of the district thought it meant mischief, especially as it frequently fired a cannon. But, after the vessel had been there a couple of days, they realised that it was not an enemy seeking to invade, but a ship in distress, signalling for help. Some boatmen went to the ship and found crew and passengers starving from lack of food and exposure. The vessel had lost her course in the stormy weather and was seeking a friendly port. She was piloted into the mouth of the Wyre and relief given to the sufferers.

Lord Derby, who was with his troops on the other side of the Ribble, hearing of the Spanish ship in the Wyre set out to take possession of it in the King's name. He crossed the river from Hesketh Bank, by the ford to Guides' House (near Lytham), and put up at Lytham Hall for the night. Meanwhile, some Parliamentarians, under Major Sparrow, had marched to Poulton in quest of the Spanish ship. He crossed the River Wyre at Aldwath Ford, Skippool (the place where the road ran down to the river and horses and carts and men could cross it when the tide was out, for there was no Shard Bridge then), in order, it is said, to avoid Lord Derby's troops, who were marching over Layton Hawes towards Rossall. Lord Derby burnt the Spanish vessel, while Major Sparrow and his soldiers looked on from the opposite bank. Thus the two opposing forces did not get into conflict.

Some of the Spaniards joined the Earl of Derby's regiment, and others settled in the district. The one cannon that was on board the ship was taken to Lancaster. Whether any shots were fired from it while it was in the Wyre I do not know, but Mr. Wm. Singleton, of Staynall (whose collection of old relics has been mentioned before), dug up a cannon-ball, about half the size of an ordinary football, in his garden. It may have come from the Spanish vessel, but one can only guess about it.

From Staynall, not far from the river bank, down to Wardleys, is a singular little narrow lane, which

seems to be an old track, about half-a-mile long, made for military purposes, and is so entrenched that soldiers could march along it without being seen. It may have been made originally by the Romans to Stalmine and Knott End, and used later by the Danes, who probably had a little port at Wardleys. But we are not sure—this is only a bit of the romantic speculative side of history—we can only conjecture.

X.

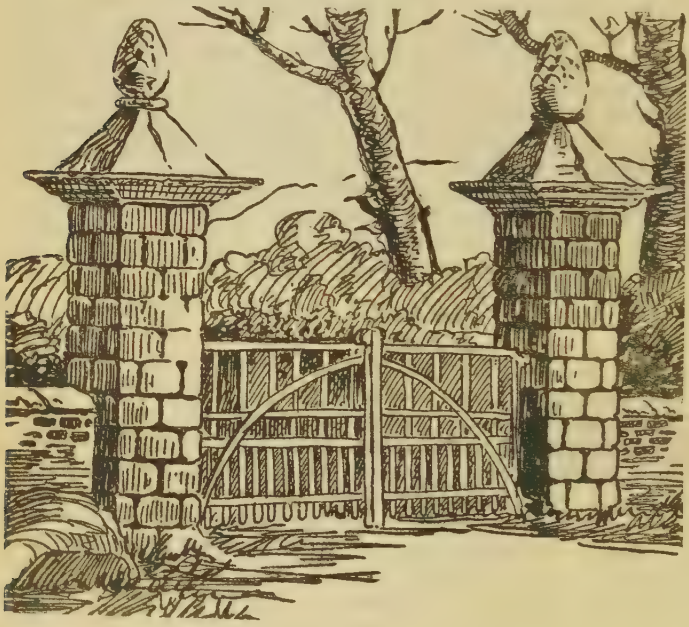
THE OLDEST HOUSE IN BLACKPOOL.

Alexander Rigby (who has already been mentioned) was the first of the Rigbys to live at Layton Hall, built in 1583 on the site of the old manor house (see Fishwick's " History of Bispham Parish "—in which Layton and the " pool " were included at that date). If any of this old building were left, it would be the oldest house in Blackpool, as Fox Hall and the Gynn were not then in existence. But it is doubtful if any part of the old house remains. The Rigbys left it, to live at Poulton, in 1693, and the old hall became a farm, the present gateposts probably being all that is left of the original structure. In that case, those old gateposts are the oldest relics of any early Blackpool human habitation, the oldest bit of property in the town.

The old manor that preceded the hall was tenanted by the Butlers, a branch of the Rawcliffe Hall family, from the abbots of Cockersand (Bulpit's " Historical Notes on the Fylde "), who had a chaplain at Layton. From a piece of land called " Epiphany Land," near Hoo Hill, the monks of Cockersand (across the bay from Pilling) also drew an annual rent to provide altar lights. There was once a windmill on Layton Rakes (near the hall—and whence the much later erected Rakes Hall got its name), also belonging to the monks of Cockersand Abbey (founded in 1194 by Theobald Walter, who changed his surname to Butler and originated the Butler family).

The old highway seawards from Poulton ran towards Hoo Hill (now Westcliffe Drive), but not right past it, taking a track through Layton village, where were market-place, stocks, and ducking-stool, towards the old inn called " The Eagle's Nest " (the hotel " No. 4 " now occupies the site), and along the front of Layton Hall, then turning into the lane that afterwards became Raikes Road and Church Street.

The Alexander Rigby who lived at Layton Hall during the Civil War was bequeathed the property by his father, Edward Rigby, of Burgh, who had also land in Chorley and the adjacent districts of Duxbury and Coppull, and " tithe of grain " in Layton, Warbreck, and Blackpool. This Alexander Rigby seems to have been a roystering, romantic, adventurous man, good-natured and generous. Tradition says he



Old Gateposts at Layton Hall.

gambled a deal at the " Eagle's Nest," and lost a lot of money, but I should rather think that his depleted funds were due to his loyal support, financial and military, of the king's side during the war. He must have had some measure of mind and stretch of soul, and taken more than a common interest in learning, literature, and art, for he was a close friend of

Richard Braithwaite, a poet of the time, who dedicated his " Two Lancashire Lovers " (published in 1640) to his " truly generous and judicious friend, Alexander Rigby, Esq."

When the Civil War broke out, Alexander Rigby was about fifty years of age, but he was staunchly active in the Royalist cause. Parliament—the opponents of the king—deprived Rigby of his office of Clerk of the Peace, which he held at this time, for joining the Royalists.

Rigby was in Civil War battles at Preston and Bolton and elsewhere, where several soldiers from the Fylde, including Captain Duddell of Woodplumpton and Captain Davis of Newton were killed. In 1644, Sir Thomas Tyldesley, retreating with the forces of Prince Rupert, the Royalist general, from the Battle of Marston Moor, in Yorkshire, pursued by Oliver Cromwell and his army, came by way of Longridge into the Fylde, and through Garstang and St. Michael's, and the Royalist troops—who did a deal of pilfering and plundering, as also did the other side —it is the way of armies to help themselves—were quartered in the Fylde villages, many at Poulton. The retreating army was so large that it is said the first company was at Kirkham before the last had crossed the bridge at St. Michael's (a distance of about seven miles).

LORD DERBY'S FRIGATES IN THE WYRE.

As already stated, the Royalists lost the war, and the King was executed. But in 1651, his son Charles, calling himself King Charles II., invaded England, and the Earl of Derby, Sir Thomas Tyldesley, and other Royalist supporters, who had taken refuge in the Isle of Man, sailed to Lancashire to support him. They landed at the Wyre mouth, with a regiment of nearly three hundred.

The first newspaper in England, for there was now one printed in London, the " Perfect Diurnall "

(a title that certainly does not err on the side of modesty), says that as soon as news of the Earl of Derby's landing in England was rumoured, " all the ships were wafted out of the rivers of Liverpool and set sail with a fair wind for Wire Water, where the frigots (frigates) rid that brought the Lord Derby over with his company, to surprise them and prevent his Lordship escaping by water."

But the Parliamentarians did not catch Lord Derby in the Wyre. He had the start, and he marched through the Fylde, with the royal banner, calling for recruits, but the response was not great. The farmers and yeomen of Windmill Land did not wish to be mixed up in the conflicts of princes and their foes, they preferred the peaceful tenour of the simple rural life. Lord Derby and his troops got to Wigan, where there was a battle with the Parliamentarians. The Royalists were defeated, Col. Tyldesley was slain, and the Earl of Derby had to flee for his life. But he was captured in Chester, and after being tried for treason was beheaded at Bolton Market Cross.

During this Civil War, England was developing in various ways, for not even the loss and misery of war can stop the evolution of humanity, though they may hinder it for a while. That peace-keeping sect, the Society of Friends, was founded by George Fox in 1647, right in the midst of Civil War. Pendulums were invented for clocks. John Milton, friend of Cromwell, was writing his great poetry. By the way, there is an old oak chair of John Milton's in Singleton Church. Sir Thomas Browne published his quaint and delightful book, " Religio Medici " (" The Religion of a Doctor ") in 1642, Robert Herrick, sweet minstrel, was writing his lovely lyrics (" Cherry Ripe," etc.), and in 1648 Jeremy Taylor gave the world his famous book, " Holy Living and Dying."

OLD BISPHAM REGISTERS.

Bispham registers and London records of local wills give us glimpses of the births, weddings and

burials in our Blackpool district. It is curious to note that a law, obviously made in the interests of woollen merchants, forbade anybody to be buried in linen under penalty of a fine (the fine was inflicted in many cases). Only woollen was allowed for burial, and there were Government inspectors to see that this law was not evaded. In Bispham registers are records of affidavits as to the woollen burial, for example, December, 1678, " Mrs. Dorothy Veale, widow, was buried ye 21 inst. and affidavit made ye 26 before Alexander Rigby, Esq."—a magistrate, and grandson of the Alexander Rigby already mentioned.

The law insisting on burial in woollen was abolished in 1712.

We have seen how everything, from pebble to star, is unceasingly changing, " change and decay in all around we see," says the hymn—worlds, continents, oceans, sea-coasts, towns, villages, buildings, roads—some of the changes, as we may witness in our own lives, taking only a few years, while others, such as the changes of land and sea, the alteration of shores, taking hundreds and thousands of years, and still others, such as the geologic epochs of the earth and the evolution of solar systems, taking millions and millions of ages. Human laws, customs, tools, weapons, dress, recreations, amusements, also change, as we have seen, and so does language, as you may have noticed from the extracts we have given from ancient records.

Chaucer and other poets and writers, and Shakespeare and others after him, almost down to our own days, used words that are now obsolete, and spelt differently words that we still use. In 1552 you find these words in Bispham Church records, " steple," " chalyce," " crosse," while Bispham itself is spelt this way, " Byspam." In the will of Richard Anyon, of Bispham, 1560, is this spelling, " though I be visited with the visitation of almighty god, hole in mynde, &c., my soule to god and the blessed ladye sant Marye . . my bodye to be buried in the pishe church yarde of bispm." You see

that a small " g " is used for " God." " Pishe " is " parish," and the funny phrase " hole in mynde " is obviously " whole in mind," though I guess we all know people who might be described as having a " hole in mynde," though not exactly in the way the old scribe who wrote that will (which he spells " wyll ") meant.

In the Bispham registers, as in Poulton, the name " Bamber " is frequent. The Bambers were the most numerous tribe in the locality. Hodgsons, Fishers, Anyons, Singletons, Tomlinsons, and Warbrecks were also plentiful. In 1665 there is a " Biccarstaff " mentioned, of Norbreck (but no forerunner of the present Blackpool Bickerstaffes, who spring from the village of Bickerstaffe, near Ormskirk).

Evidence that the district was getting more populated in 1650 is found in a petition by the inhabitants of Marton, who, with that sense of their jolly importance which causes them to elect a " mock " mayor of the village at the old Saddle Inn every year, requested to be made into a parish of their own, and also asked that " Laiton, Rakes, and Blackpoole being adjoining, may be annexed to theirs." Such enterprise always characterised the people of the ancient village by the Mere, famous for its apple-pies, fondly claimed as the source of both the abstract greatness of the place and the concrete greatness of the natives, and renowned for merry legends about pigs and bicycles and windmills, as well as celebrated as the birth-place of Teddy Ashton's " Georgie Greensauce." One would not be surprised if the hustling Martonians should propose to incorporate Blackpool in their village to-day.

THEOLOGICAL BOTHER.

The Civil War ended in Oliver Cromwell being made Lord Protector of the British Republic, but after his death intrigues were set going to restore the Royal Family, and Prince Charles (son of the executed Charles the First) eventually got back to the throne,

during the period (1660-1685) when Butler wrote his satirical poem "Hudibras," and John Bunyan, the travelling tinker of Bedford, told the tale of "The Pilgrim's Progress."

In 1662 the Church of England, having itself developed that spirit of intolerance which had caused it to kick and sever from the Church of Rome, got Parliament to pass an Act of Uniformity to compel all ministers to observe a certain set service and take certain oaths. The ministers who believed in liberty of conscience and speech refused to accept this theological dictatorship, and in consequence many were expelled from their churches, much against the wishes of the congregations who loved them. Thus began Nonconformity. In the Fylde district, amongst those turned out of the churches were the Rev. Isaac Ambrose, of Garstang (member of the Ambrose family, of Ambrose Hall, Woodplumpton), the Rev. W. Bullock, of Hambleton, the Rev. Joseph Harrison, of Lund (Clifton), and the Rev. Nathaniel Baxter, M.A., St. Michaels-on-Wyre. In 1665, a further enactment, the Five Mile Act, an awfully ironic exemplification of Christian brotherhood, forbade any of these Nonconformist ministers to go within five miles of any borough or any church with which they had been connected, and so they held services secretly, in farms, and cottages, and barns.

At Elswick, the pretty village of orchards ten miles east of Blackpool, is an old chapel which dates back to these days. Services have been held on that site, in barn or old chapel, since 1650. Every first week in June there are anniversary sermons, held in a big tent in a field, and attended by folks from all parts of the North of England.

In 1663, King Charles the Second—and this is one of the things to his credit, founded the Royal Society (London) for the pursuit of Science, which has done so much to rid the world of error and intolerance, and the Greenwich Observatory, with Flamsteed, the astronomer, in charge—succeeded by Halley, of Halley's Comet fame—was erected.

XI.

OLD FOX HALL.

It was about this time that the Fox Hall was built by the "black poole." It may have been erected just before 1660, when Prince Charles became King, ostensibly as a summer residence by the sea for the Tyldesleys, but probably for another object altogether, for tradition says that while the secret plots were going on to get Charles back to the throne he sometimes hid at Fox Hall, then a lonely mansion in a desolate region on the coast, whence he could easily and quickly escape by the sea when occasion necessitated. It may be that Edward Tyldesley, the son of the Sir Thomas Tyldesley killed in the battle at Wigan, 1651, built the house on the beach specially for this purpose. It was originally only a small, three-gabled building, made of cobble-stones from the shore, with a small look-out tower. Over the main entrance was the Latin motto, "Seris factura nepotibus" ("as thou sowest so shall thy children reap"), and over the south gateway a stone on which was sculptured a pelican feeding her young. At the time Fox Hall was built, somewhere between the years 1655 and 1665 (though we cannot be absolutely sure as to these figures) there would only be a few fishermen's huts near the "black pool."

The motto above quoted was a line Charles the Second intended to have for an order of "Knights of the Royal Oak," to commemorate the perilous occasion when the fugitive prince was saved by hiding up an oak-tree (May 29th, still observed by some folks with decorations of green boughs as Royal Oak Day).

Nothing of the old Fox Hall, which eventually became a farm, and then an inn (as we shall see later) is left. No traces of it nor relics are to be found in the present hotel on the site.

THE RIGBYS OF LAYTON HALL.

The Rigby Family, of Layton Hall, had removed to Poulton (1693), building there a house, on whose site is now a bank. But a stone slab, from the demolished building, with the Rigby coat-of-arms carved thereon, is in the possession of Mr. Walker, Poulton Post Office (next door to the bank). The Alexander Rigby who lived at Poulton was second son of the Alexander Rigby, already mentioned, of Layton Hall. The Poulton Rigby became a merchant and trader (this was at a time when woollen goods were "protected," even to the law compelling their use for burials) in partnership with a London gentleman, travelled all over Europe, was made a County Magistrate, and knighted. His firm's vessels, on the way to Cairo for coffee (scarce and dear at this time), were attacked by French ships and captured. This loss bankrupted the firm, and Rigby was imprisoned for debt (the law in those days), but liberated so that he could meet and pay his creditors off. He died poor, however, the family declined and faded out in a direct line, though some collateral branches of it may still have descendants in the Fylde. Thus do families change, and pass, like everything else, with their vicissitudes, their rise and fall, and some poor become rich, and some rich become poor, and nothing abides, for Nature and Time and Death are ever re-distributing and re-arranging the earth and mankind.

So passed the reign of King Charles the Second, and his mistresses (it was fashionable at this time for kings to have harem habits), amongst whom was the good-hearted actress Nell Gwynne, whose story is romantically presented to us in a drama of our time. It was largely an age of licentiousness, amongst the upper classes, anyhow, for the common people were working and slaving, as ever, and the plays and poetry of the time are very free in the matter of sex, not in the plain, blunt way of honest writers who call spades spades, but in the cultured nastiness of the clever immoralist. This state of things was to some

extent a reaction from the Puritan severity that had been enforced during Cromwell's time. With all their virtues the Puritans had one great lack, no sense of humour, that humour which keeps a man balanced and broad and sweet with good fellowship. The nation went from the strict extreme to the loose extreme.

Under William Penn, some Quakers, then a new and persecuted sect, went to America and established our American colonies.

The country got dissatisfied with the Stuart dynasty, the successors of King Charles, and asked William of Orange, who had married the daughter of King James, to come and be King of England. William accepted the offer, and King James fled from England (1688). The bother was chiefly religious, or rather we should say theological. True religion, that is, faith in God and duty to our neighbours, would not generate strife, but theology, that is, creed dogmas and church rules, made by men, has always been a creator of dissension and the cause of much iniquity and war. This struggle was between Catholics and Protestants, who both forgot true religion in their obstinacy for their own particular theology. The Stuart kings were inclined to Catholicism. The people of England, or at least their nobles and certain rulers, wanted a Protestant on the throne. But behind this reason were other causes, many and complicated, the lust for power, for lands, money, and plunder, of which both sides were equally guilty. It was all a game for lordship. There were six of one and half-a-dozen of the other, like "the lion and the unicorn, fighting for the crown," and most of those who pulled the strings on either side were humbugs and rascals, drawing into their intrigues and quarrels trusting and decent people to their downfall and doom.

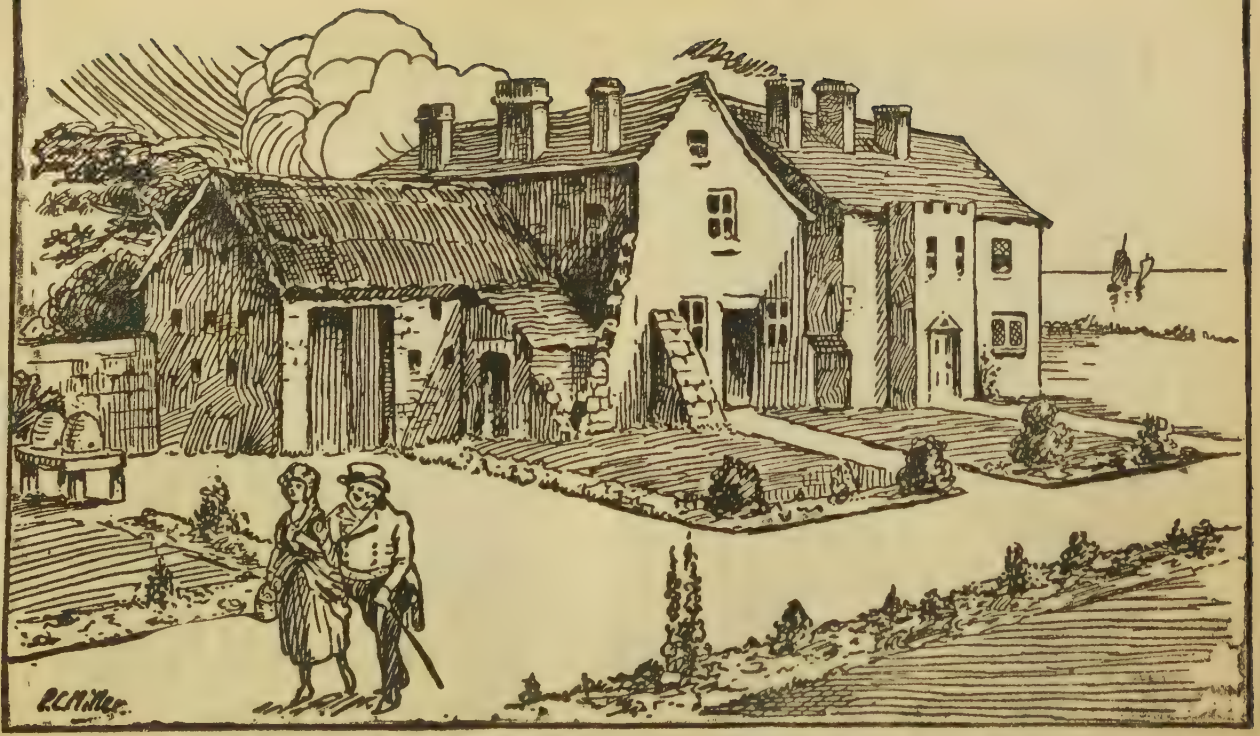
There were plots to get the Stuart line back to the throne, and in these conspiracies the Fylde, always a Catholic stronghold, was concerned, and young Blackpool was involved, too, for the Tyldesley family, living at Fox Hall, were supporters of the Stuart line.

The adherents of the Stuart cause were called Jacobites (from the Latin word for James, the name of the exiled King), and there was a secret Jacobite club and headquarters at the "Unicorn" Inn, Walton-le-Dale, Preston. The members of the old Fylde families, the Butlers, of Rawcliffe Hall, the Tyldesleys, of Fox Hall, and others, attended this club at Preston, and the Fylde was probably visited by Prince Charlie (the son of King James), the man who was eager to secure the English crown. Tradition says that he stayed at Fox Hall.

Rebellion was brewing, and the Government arrested some of the ringleaders. In 1690 and 1694 Catholic gentlemen were tried for conspiracy and sent to prison. But these severe measures did not stop the secret plotting to restore the Stuart line. The secret meetings went on, especially in the North of England, in the Fylde, and at Preston, and at Fox Hall, until the Stuart supporters deemed the time ripe to uplift the banners of war and call their followers to battle.

THE OLD SQUIRE AND HIS DIARY.

While these plots and counterplots (1690 to 1712) concerning the rival Royal Houses and Protestants and Catholics were going on, when the Stuart Rebellion was ready for bursting on the land, there was living at Fox Hall an old country gentleman, or squire, named Thomas Tyldesley, son of the man who built the mansion by the "black pool," and he kept a diary, which shows that he must have been a man of superior mind and observation, with an inclination to take notes of things that interested him—in short, Thomas Tyldesley had a bit of the journalistic instinct, and has left us some little verbal snapshots of his time for which the folks of Blackpool to-day are indebted to him. He tells us of the infancy of Blackpool, when his hall was the only abode of any size on the Fylde coast between Lytham Hall and Rossall Grange.



The Foxhall, Blackpool, where the Tyldesleys resided till the early part of the 18th Century.

Filling in for ourselves the details and colour with the aid of a little imagination, Tyldesley's diary gives a good picture of Blackpool and district at the beginning of the eighteenth century. But before looking at Tyldesley's glimpses of the life of his day, let us get the scene, the surroundings, the stage, if you like, in which he and the living characters he meets enacted the simple drama of their life, the tale of their own day. We must bear in mind there were then no railways, no motors, no bicycles, no trams, no palaces of amusement, no Town Hall, no police station, no Chief Constable, no daily newspapers, no public libraries, no electricity, no steam engines, no lifeboats, no steamboats, no inland factory towns sending excursionists to the seaside, no municipal elections, no voting by ballot, no trade unions (happy days, then, one hears some employers say), no combines (here one hears the employees repeat the employers' exclamation), no co-operative stores, no public parks, and no free elementary schools. But, of course, there were grammar schools and colleges for the well-to-do, and there were churches, and market crosses and stocks, and whipping-posts, and cock-fights, and fox-hunting, and travelling by coaches and horses.

As you will guess, the natives of Blackpool and district in those days would not get much in touch with the rest of Lancashire. The region was isolated, and surrounded by mosses, meres, and swampy bogs, cutting it off from intercourse with the world beyond. The people, though homely and honest, had simple ways and habits, were uneducated and superstitious, and credited the lonely lanes and sand dunes with goblins and ghosts. Their speech was a variety of the Lancashire dialect, with a few words and phrases peculiar to the locality. The common food was rye-bread, peas and beans, jannock (a cake, made of oat-meal—from which we get the Lancashire expression, "it's jannock," or "he's jannock," meaning good, genuine, all right), throdkin (a cake of oatmeal and bacon), pikelins (muffins), broth, and, of course, cockles and mussels from the beaches.

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY DRESS.

The women of the working classes wore flannel and linsey-woolsey, round jackets, and petticoats, with stomachers and be-ribboned hats and other fineries for Sundays and holidays. The women of the upper class, the ladies, were, of course, more elaborately apparelled—laced stomachers beneath a bodice with wide-cuffed sleeves, silk skirt looped up behind, revealing a glimpse of costly petticoat, decked with flounces and furbelows, while the gentlemen wore gorgeous coloured vests, down to the knee, velvet breeches, silk stockings, buckled shoes with red heels, coats with long skirts and wide cuffs, decked with gold or silver lace and periwigs. It was certainly a picturesque period for costume, and the gentlemen wore as fine feathers as the ladies, if not finer. It was an age of delicate powder and paint, and laces, and the stately courtesy of the gavotte and minuet (for the waltz, and the more modern dances that followed it, were not introduced to England till a hundred years later)—a charmingly costumed generation that looks very pretty when pictured for us on the stage in romantic play and comic opera.

While Thomas Tyldesley was living at Fox Hall, the Bank of England had been founded (1694), and Peter the Great, Emperor of Russia, a wise monarch, determined to see things and learn things for himself, had been in England, all unknown, working at a shipyard in London as a labourer, and England and France had got at war over something or other, and our general, the Duke of Marlborough, a man with a keen eye to Number One, and not much conscience, yet a great fighter, was trouncing the French on the Continent. He is mentioned in Southey's poem "The Battle of Blenheim," where a little boy asks an old soldier what the war was about, and what they killed each other for, to which the old man replies in two lines, which are a sort of refrain to every verse:—

"Ah, that I do not know," said he,
"But 'twas a famous victory."

This French-English war was indirectly responsible for a big wreck on our coast in the year 1702. William Stout, a Lancaster man (who, like Tyldesley, wrote a diary), says he was in the merchant ship " Employment," which was captured by a French man-of-war. The captain of the " Employment " offered to pay £1,000 for ransom of his vessel. The French agreed, and put a crew on board to bring the vessel back to Lancashire, but the French pilot, ignorant of our coast and sea, got astray in the Irish Sea and ran aground near Rossall (off Norbreck). Wind came on and the vessel was hopelessly stranded. It had a valuable cargo of sugar and cotton. With the aid of horses and carts the sugar was packed in casks and taken to Squire Fleetwood's barn at Rossall, while the cotton was stored in Bispham Church. The " Employment " became a total wreck, and broke to pieces.

" YE SMALL LORD OF ROSSALL."

Thomas Tyldesley, the Fox Hall gentleman, married a sister of his friend Sir Alexander Rigby, of Layton Hall and Poulton—thus linking the two oldest houses in Blackpool—and led the tranquil life of a leisured country squire, visiting on horseback (no motors then) his kindred and the neighbouring gentry, working in his garden, going fishing, or otter-hunting in the Wyre, or to cock-fights at Poulton and elsewhere. A quiet country life, ideal in its way. He also was in touch with the conspirators planning the Scottish Rebellion (as it was called, because the Scottish lords originated and supported it), for he frequently went to Preston, where the Jacobite club was, and was often at the houses of the Butlers and others who were involved in the affair—but of these matters he says nothing in his diary, for he was a cautious man, not caring to embark on rash enterprises, and no doubt he counselled his friends to keep out of all such political and theological mischief and royal quarrels.

Thomas Tyldesley was 55 years of age when he commenced his diary, which tells how, in 1712, he

went to Layton Hawes to see races—foot races as well as horse races—" fowling on Thornton Marsh," " bowling at Green House," " hunting the hare," went to see " ye cock-fight, dined in the pitt with Mr. Clifton " (that would be Squire Clifton of Lytham), " good sport at fishing " (March 16, 1714), " took 8 brace large grown tenches, 6 noble carp, some gudgeons, a large eel " (he spells it " eyell "), says that at the cockpit he " gave the fiddler 6d." (they were musical cock-fights, you see), and also " won 30s." in bets (of course, there was gambling in those days as ours), " in the morning Jos. Townson and I went to Staining . . . (Sep. 5th, 1713) . . . thence to Layton Hawes to see a foot-race, where I won 6d. of Jos. Townson, . . . so home. Gave White my winnings."

The last little entry is a pleasant relevation. It shows some generosity.

There was a cockpit at Skippool, near Poulton. Tyldesley mentions it often.

Other entries in the diary (which is published in book form and may be seen in Blackpool Public Library) give glimpses of the happy country life—

> " Very busy all morning in my hay."
> " All day in the house and my garden."

He also tells about his " physickings "—he seems to have taken a deal of medicine,—he was at that age when time begins to play tricks with a man's physiology, and indigestion and rheumatism, and the ailments that attack our wearing span get their opportunity.

One of the most entertaining, most humorous, of the entries—one also showing the carousing habits of the time, is the following:—

> " Aug. 2nd, 1712.—Went to ye King's Arms and got my dinner with Brother . . . Met with Justice Longworth, Capt. Veale, Justice Pearson, Frank Nickinson, and ye small lord of Rossall. We were very merry upon ye small lord of Rossall, and spent 1s. apiece in sack and white wine which elevated ye petite Lord that before

he went to bed he tuck ye freedom of biting his man Sharrocke's thumb off just beyond ye nail." (I have modernised most of the spelling in that record. The " King's Arms " referred to was a Preston Inn).

In other words, Tyldesley and his friends got the " small lord of Rossall " drunk for their sport. Perhaps the phrase " drunk as a lord " originated in this period, which was a dissolute age, " ladies," as well as " gentlemen," thinking nothing of getting intoxicated and " swearing like troopers." This " small lord " was Edward Fleetwood, who, though thirty years of age, apparently was of little stature, undersized, and a weakling. Already the Fleetwood family was degenerating, and those who believe in fate would say that the curse of the expelled Widow Allen was inexorably operating. At any rate, there is something strange, something of tragic destiny, something obscure, veiled, mysterious, about the family at this time. As we have seen, the lord of the manor himself was a puny fellow. His younger brother Paul died in humble circumstances at Kirkham. Records say that one son of the family was disinherited. Was this Paul Fleetwood, and if so, what for? The " small lord " had no heir—only a daughter—who married Roger Hesketh, of North Meols, near Southport.

But here are a few more illuminative extracts from Thomas Tyldesley's diary :—

1712.—" May 31st—Went to ye Hays (Layton Hawes) to see a race betwixt Mr. Harper's mare and Sanderson's. Not a great deal of company. . . . After ye race to Lytham . . thence back to Fox Hall." (He does not say which steed won.)

1712.—" Sep. 11th—All morning at Fox Hall with Sammy Butler a-fowling, about noon Capt. Veale came and dined with us; we were very merry over one bottle of claret and two of sherry."
Here's a memorable entry—an early record of

the travelling Scotchmen who invaded England with goods to sell—one of the pioneers of the "pack" army, the travelling drapers, who a century later became so numerous in Lancashire—one of the scouters, forerunners, of the enterprising Caledonians (do not think I merrily mock, for I believe one of these canny, industrious adventurers is included in my own pedigree), who swarmed down upon our shire and got the good berths (those where you get your living with your coat on your back, as the Lancashire folks say), and, let me add, generally deserved them. But here's the entry:—

1713.—"Sep. 14—Paid 6d. for boating at Sharde, saw ye ferrymen carry out of ye boat a Scot and his pack, a sight I never saw before, being 56 years of age."

"Sharde" was the old ford where now is Shard Bridge.

PIONEER SCOTCH PACKMAN.

Or maybe that Scot with the pack was a messenger from the Stuart conspirators in Scotland to the adherents in the Fylde. His appearance was certainly singular. There was not so much trade to be done in this lonesome, sparsely-populated Fylde. He was well wide of the highroad from Lancaster to Preston and the Lancashire towns. He may even have had secret words for Thomas Tyldesley himself.

Be that as it may, Tyldesley took no part in the Scottish Rebellion when it flared up two years later, for he was dead and buried—buried at Churchtown, near Garstang, says tradition, but, if so, his grave is unmarked and undiscoverable. He died just before the rebellion broke out. But his eldest son took an active part in it.

DOOM OF THE FYLDE REBELS.

King George the First was crowned in 1714, when Alexander Pope was writing his poetry, and then the plots and intrigues to restore the Stuart dynasty came

to a head. There were Jacobite sympathisers all over the country. Ballads were made about the young Prince James, the Stuart exile, and actually sung under the palace walls of King George himself, who, however, would not be able to grasp the words, for he knew not a word of English; he could only talk German. One of them ran thus:—

> The Man in the Moon may wear out his shoon
> By running after King Charles's Wain,
> But all to no end, for the times will not mend
> Till the King enjoys his own again.

The line about "King Charles's Wain" was a significant punning reference to King Charles (the former Stuart King) and the constellation of the "Plough," "The Great Bear," the "Seven Stars," also called "Charles's Wain." The year following, 1715, the Earl of Mar raised the Stuart standard in Scotland, and called the clans to war.

This Scottish Rebellion, as it was called, though a great many English participated in it, brought strife and death, disaster and woe, and gallows executions, into the Fylde, and beheadings on the block on Tower Hill, London. The Townleys, of Townley Hall, Burnley, got many young Manchester gentry, sons of cotton merchants, to rally to the Stuart cause. In the Fylde district Edward Tyldesley (son of Thomas Tyldesley, the diarist), of Fox Hall, Richard Butler, of Rawcliffe Hall, and John Dalton, of Thurnham Hall, became captains in the Jacobite army. But Henry Hoghton, of Hoghton Tower (Preston), and Colonel Charteris, of Hornby Castle (near Lancaster), joined the Hanoverian side, and got together a large force of men to oppose the Scottish invaders

Peter Clarke (no forbear of mine, to my knowledge, though his scribbling propensity would seem to indicate such pedigree), of Lancaster, wrote a "Journall" or diary of the daily events of the Jacobite march through Lancashire, and tells how they occupied Preston on the 9th of November (1715). Peter of our patronymic was a close observer, and noted how Mars and Venus generally go together, for he says that the Scottish troops, when leaving Lan-

caster to march through Garstang to Preston, were "very sorrowfull to part with their new Loves." The same at Preston, "The Ladys in this towne of Preston," says Peter, "are so very beautyfull and richly attired that the gentlemen soldiers from Wednesday to Saturday minded nothing but courting and feasting."

That fatal military fondness for the girls resulted in an indulgence in dancing parties and a neglect of military vigilance, which, coupled with some treachery, caused the defeat of the Scottish army, and its utter rout by General Wills, leader of King George's forces. The Scots left Preston on the run for the north and their own country. The rebellion was crushed, and the insurgents had to pay the bitter price of defeat. Four hundred prisoners were herded and starved in Lancaster Castle. Many were put to death, most barbarously, first being hanged, then cut down while still alive, their bodies ripped open, their heads chopped off and stuck on the posts at the Castle gates. Some Fylde men—followers of the Butler family—were hanged at Garstang—their graves are in Churchtown churchyard. The following grim little bill, from the records at Lancaster Castle, tells its own terrible story. It is the hangman's account for eight executions:—"February 16th and 18th, charge at Garstang and Lancaster, for executing four at either place, £22 0s. 8d."

Only a few lines—but behind that little summary lies the tragedy of widows and orphans mourning the fathers who went out to fight for a prince and died on the gallows.

After the battle at Preston, the conquering army searched the Fylde for the rebel captains. Edward Tyldesley, of Fox Hall, was taken prisoner at Preston, and lay awaiting trial for high treason, the penalty being death by the axe. Richard Butler and his father, Henry, had got away from Preston, but a party of soldiers, in quest of them, set out for Rawcliffe Hall.

Squire Butler's Escape from Rawcliffe Hall in 1715.

BUTLER OF RAWCLIFFE'S ESCAPE.

It was dusk when the horse-soldiers in search of the Butlers galloped over the bridge of St. Michaels and along the Wyre bank towards Rawcliffe Hall, where the father and son, expecting pursuit, were making hasty arrangements to get away up the river. They heard the thunder of the horse's hoofs up the long avenue to the hall, and knew that peril was upon them. The son Richard urged his father to escape by the rear of the hall while he held the troops at the front, and he would follow if possible, as it was no good the two being taken, if there was any chance for one to get away. The father, with two of his men, crept out at the back of the hall, and through the wood—the Rawcliffe Wood that is so sweet in March with snowdrops and so beautiful in June with bluebells—down to the river, where there was a waiting row-boat concealed under the high bank, and under the stormy sky of black drifting clouds and fitful glimpses of the moon, he sailed away towards the Wyre mouth. A Wardleys skiff conveyed him to the Isle of Man, whence he got away to France.

His son Richard, to the grief of his wife and daughters, was taken away to Preston, thence to London, where he was cast in jail. He was sentenced to death, but died in prison on the night before he was to be beheaded. The estate of the Butlers, Rawcliffe Hall and its lands, which, as we have seen, included "the pool" that afterwards became the "black pool," was confiscated, and sold into other hands, and so strangers came to dwell in the old mansion which had been the home of generations of Butlers. Curiously, as if some evil fate dogged those who took possession of the hall, every family since at Rawcliffe Hall (which, of course, has its traditions of ghosts, inside, in the room over the old courtyard, and outside in the Monks' Walk) has had no direct heir, and the squires and other tenants (with one or two exceptions) have taken to wild, carousing ways and gone to the deuce.

Edward Tyldesley, of Fox Hall, was tried for high treason, but was lucky in coming before a favourable jury, for, though witnesses testified to seeing him march up Preston streets with uplifted sword, and the judge summed up dead against him, he was acquitted. The judge was surprised at the verdict, and discharged the jury in disgust, saying that the poor fellows who had been led into the battle by Tyldesley had been hanged, while he, their leader, was allowed to go scot free.

However, let us be glad that the young man escaped, and sorry for those who suffered death. John Dalton, of Thurnham Hall, was found guilty, but he craved the royal clemency, as did two others, and they were let off with enormous fines, the payment of which almost bankrupted them.

SMUGGLING.

Yet these executions and punishments did not deter the Stuart adherents from raising another rebellion a generation afterwards, on behalf of "Prince Charlie," son of the prince for whom the Fylde and Over-Wyre Catholic gentry risked and lost so much in 1715. We will deal with that event in due course.

In the days of Tyldesley, the Fox Hall gentleman who kept a diary, and a tame fox—chained in the yard—and for years afterwards, while Blackpool was growing into a fair-sized village, there was illicit trading in alcoholic liquors, in one word, smuggling between the Fylde coast and the Isle of Man. The opportunities and facilities for such law-dodging enterprise were numerous. It was a lonely coast, miles away from the ports, and on the edge of a sparsely-populated countryside. The big belt of sand dunes afforded excellent hiding places for casks of liquor, while the Wyre was convenient for escaping into when in a tight corner, and the smugglers were often busy at nights at the Gynn, or among the Starr Hills and up the River Wyre from Knott End to Staynall and maybe further. That there were boats on our coast

capable of voyaging to the Isle of Man is proved by the fact that Thomas Tyldesley of Fox Hall records having a schooner built for himself for trade with the island. In his diary, July 7, 1713, he writes:—"Made a bargain between Joe Wadsworth, Tom Few, and Joe Twentyman for building a 60-ton ship at £1 2s. per ton."

One wonders if our friend Tyldesley did a little smuggling now and then. It is very likely, as most folks regarded it as no worse a crime than evading the income-tax nowadays. Anyhow, the following entry rather hints it:—"April 24, 1712—Gave Evan Williams, the Manx skipper, 8 double bottles to fill with brandy, gave him a piece of beef to take to the Island."

Potatoes had been introduced into the Fylde at this time. In his diary, October 8, 1712, Tyldesley says: "Paid 2d. pro potetows (the spelling is amusing to our twentieth century eyes, but the word "potatoes" was thus pronounced by our forefathers —occasionally you may hear aged rural folks thus speak it to-day)." He was also fond of a pipe of tobacco, as the following entries in his diary testify:—

1712, Oct. 22—2d. pro tobaco.
Nov. 8—To Preston for tobaco.
1713, Oct. 12—We smoked 2 pipes.
1714, Jan. 4—Pd. 5d. for tobac for the Ellel Crag colliers (Tyldesley owned a little coal mine there).
Jan. 7—Sat smoking till past 12.
Jan. 30—Gave Ned Mally 1s. to buy tobac and candles.
Aug. 10—Paid 1d. pro pipe (probably a long clay).

XII.

THE FIRST COMPANY-HOUSE KEEPER.

The village of Blackpool was growing, though but slowly, and probably the old Gynn Inn, for generations familiar to the Blackpool visitor, but now demolished (in the year 1921), was erected about this time, when Blackpool was beginning to get a name for that wonderful healthy appetite-raising air which is still its unrivalled renown. The annual race meeting on Layton Hawes (about the site of the present racecourse) brought the kindred and friends of the great Fylde families, the Rigbys of Layton Hall, the Veales of Whinney Heys, the Allens, and later the Fleetwoods of Rossall Hall, the Hesketh's of Mains Hall, the Cliftons of Lytham Hall, the Tyldesleys of Fox Hall, the Westbys of Burns Hall, and others, to the district, as well as strangers who could afford the travelling methods of the time, horse and carriage, and these must have been pleased with the fragrant countryside by the glorious sea, and the fine level sands, excellent for equestrian exercise and delight. They would come again and again, and tell other people of the charm of this little village of Blackpool near Fox Hall by the sea.

Blackpool's early historians, Thornber, and later Porter, tell us that such was the case. For some years before the second Scottish Rebellion, visitors, not, of course, in crowds, but still numerously, began to patronise the Fylde Coast every summer, from about the year 1714 (reign of George I.), and by the year 1735 they were so plentiful that the villagers, the fisherfolk, seeing that there was money to be made, or at least some addition to income for the livelihood, by casting their lines for holiday-makers' pockets as well as in the waters, began to devise accommodation for the people who came Blackpool way for health

and pleasure. The name of Ethart o' Whiteside, or Edward Whiteside, comes down through the years as the first, or one of the first, to make a start in the catering and company-house keeping business. It is paragrammatically noteworthy that a Whiteside should start Blackpool. The company-house keepers ought to put up a monument or a shrine—or at least have a little statue in the office of the Association—to Ethart, or perhaps we should say his wife, for his success was largely due to her energy and special abilities. She was a splendid cook (of Welsh extraction) and a genial body who made everybody feel at home, and that's a great factor in public catering, as all Blackpool folks know. Thus, you see, it was in the beginnings of Blackpool as it is to-day—the company-house ladies had the big responsibility and did all the work, while their spouses, the more or less useless males, sat on the promenade (there was none then, so we'll say on the sands) gossiping with the visitors, and occasionally helping with the washing-up or polishing the boots. Yes, I think we may deem Mrs. Whiteside the pioneer company-house keeper of Blackpool, and my word, wouldn't she stare if she could only see to what dimensions the bed-and-board business has grown since she first fried ham-and-eggs in her old thatched house in the fields that are now covered by General Street (called after General Yates, who had a house on the site fifty or sixty years later). The Whitesides did well, as they deserved to do, for if there is a harder job than company-house keeping I'd like to know it, and were able to go and live " retired " at Layton in their old age.

Other cottagers, besides the Whitesides, laid themselves out for visitors, and so Blackpool village was becoming a little quiet holiday resort, with recreations and diversions of sea-bathing, horse-riding on the sands, and boating, while the big outside world was going on with its Royal differences and plots and court splendours and intrigues, and its literature and art, and law-making. Books and religious sects and movements that are now familiar in our environment came new upon the scene. Defoe's " Robinson

Crusoe " was published in 1719—just fancy, never a boy or girl had read that story till that date—William Shakespeare and Queen Elizabeth and Sir Walter Raleigh and Oliver Cromwell and King Charles the First, and the folks of their generations, had never read " Robinson Crusoe "—" Gulliver's Travels," by Dean Swift, in 1726; " The Beggar's Opera," by John Gay, 1728, the day when Garrick and Mrs. Bracegirdle and Peg Woffington were stars on the stage; the " Gentleman's Magazine " and Addison's " Spectator " started in 1731, the year when the law against witchcraft was repealed.

Also, while the Second Scottish Rebellion was brewing, John Wesley founded the Methodist Society in London (1639) and went preaching all over the land—there is no record that he ever got to Blackpool, though at Freckleton in the Fylde an old barn is pointed out as a place where he held a service—Anson was voyaging round the world, the Swedenborg sect began (1740), Handel's " Messiah " was first published, though not sung till 1750, Dr. Johnson, who made the first English dictionary, was writing books, the Milnrow schoolmaster, John Collier, under the name of " Tim Bobbin," started the literature of the Lancashire folk-speech or dialect, and Henry Fielding was issuing the first English novels, when the Second Scottish Rebellion broke out in the year 1745, in the month of August.

THE 1745 REBELLION.

The news excited and alarmed the Fylde, and when the inhabitants heard that the Scottish rebels, led by " Bonnie Prince Charlie "—the hero of many Scottish songs of that time, such as " Charlie is my darling," familiar to-day, for a good ballad outlasts battles and princes, and a fine song reigns on when thrones and dynasties are dust, as well as a romantic character in novels by Scott, Thackeray, and scores of lesser writers—were at Lancaster and marching from Preston (August 27th) they came to hide their

money and valuables in the seclusions of Marton, Layton, and Blackpool district, as favourable remote places off the track that the invaders would take. They also sent their cattle to this neighbourhood. Thornber says that a quantity of Charles I. coins found in a ditch at Carlton, and in the wall of an old house at Poulton, were probably thus hidden during these troublous times, while silver ware, jugs, spoons, tankards, watches, etc., were stored in farms at Marton, or buried in the fields, some at Hounds Hill (near the Central Station) then a field. For fearful rumour—as in all wars, even to-day—painted the enemy as black as possible, the Scottish troops were said to be barbarians, almost cannibals, with instruments of torture, and more ferocious than wild beasts, who could only be appeased, if at all, by feeding them well. One scared old gentleman at Poulton, determined to defend his property to the death, barricaded his house and blocked up his doors and windows.

But the Scottish army left the Fylde alone in its march to Preston and Manchester, where Prince Charlie, the Young Pretender, as he was called by his opponents, tried to rally the Catholic gentlemen of Lancashire to his banner, but the response was disappointing. The rebellion of 1715 and its grim consequences were yet in memory, and even those who sympathised and would have liked to see Prince Charlie wearing the crown of England, thought it discreet to keep out of the conflict. John Byrom, author of the hymn "Christians Awake," and many other poems, as well as of the famous couplet,

> "Strange all this difference should be
> Twixt Tweedledum and Tweedledee,"

(often erroneously attributed to Dean Swift) lived in Manchester, but not even Prince Charlie could draw him into open support, though his Jacobite sympathies were well known. The following squib he wrote expresses his careful non-committal attitude—

"God bless the King—I mean our Faith's defender—
God bless—no harm in blessing—the Pretender,
But who Pretender is, or who is King,
God bless us all, that's quite another thing."

But some Manchester young gentlemen joined the rebels, and paid for their loyalty by death at the headsman's hands, as also did Francis Townley, of Townley Hall, Burnley.

The Scottish army retreated from Derby, pursued by the English forces, under the leadership of the brother of the German-British King George, the Duke of Cumberland, who got the nickname of "the butcher," because of his cruelty to the captured rebel leaders, some of whom King George would have spared, but the Duke of Cumberland would have no clemency. The rebels, chased north, made a stand at Culloden, and were defeated and routed (1745). The leaders were caught, taken to prison, and sentenced to death for high treason. Horace Walpole, in his letters (which give vivid pictures of this period), tells of the efforts made by the wives and kin of these Scottish lords—fine, brave fellows, most of them, whose only crime was that they were on the losing side—to save them from execution, and it is pitiful, tragic reading.

SCOTTISH SOLDIERS IN THE FYLDE.

During the retreat from Derby to Scotland many of the rebel army got into the Fylde, foraging. There is a great Layton tradition that one barefoot kilted Scot, in need of footgear, took the shoon off the feet of John Miller. Some of the Scottish soldiers, famished and weary, found their way to Mains Hall, and were relieved by Mrs. Hesketh, even at the risk of being implicated in the rebellion. A man named James Kirkham, of Staining, renowned for his size and strength—it is said he could lift his horse and carry it—fought on the English side at the Battle of Culloden. A coarse and debased Layton man acted as hangman when many of the humbler rebel prisoners

were hanged, and Thornber states that he behaved with wanton cruelty to his victims.

The rebels of the higher class perished on the headsman's block, and Thornber relates that a man of Little Poulton, with a morbid taste for the bloodthirsty and horrible, walked all the way from Poulton to London, 230 miles, to see the Scottish lords decapitated on Tower Hill, and when he returned home, and was asked what he had seen, all he could reply was, "I saw their heids cut off." Of the wonders and magnificence of the great city, of the scenery on the highways thither, he had observed nothing. Such an ironic episode as this—not to mention others of far greater historic weight and woe—this pitiful example of how in the chance and whirligig of things events should so ridiculously befall that a yokel with nothing in his head but a lust for blood should stand and watch heads full of chivalry and refinement cut off—noble souls going to doom while a base mindless biped gloats over the spectacle—gives the pessimistic philosopher weedy ground for the belief that this world is only a plaything of puppets for the callous amusement of indifferent gods, and excuses the mood in which Shakespeare wrote—

> "As flies to wanton boys are we to the gods,
> They kill us for their sport."

But the optimistic heart sings a cheerier song and holds that despite these infernal incongruities, these dramatic absurdities, these butcherous bewilderments of battle and war, these maddening contrasts of the illiterate's boot grinding the head of the scholar, of rude force triumphing over gentle spirits, of ignorance lording it over learning, of vice on the throne and virtue in the jail, of tricky greed in the luxurious seats of authority while honesty sits at the lean table, there is over all, and behind all, an almighty power, an omniscent intelligence, an incorruptible justice, an infinite love, a Deity, who is evolving all human affairs to a divine consummation wherein all the riddles of earth shall be revealed and all its discords and sorrows turned to celestial harmony and joy.

XIII.

BLACKPOOL IN 1750.

Bishop Pococke, who travelled much about the country (writes Charles Roeder in an excellent little book about the rise and growth of Blackpool), says, about the year 1750, that "at Black Pool near the sea are accommodations for people who come to bathe." This was about the time the first English novels were being written by Richardson and Smollett and Fielding.

Ethart Whiteside, on his retirement, disposed of his company-house to a man called Tom the Cobbler, who got a licence to supply liquors and spirits, put a home-made sign up, and thus made the house into an inn. But the place was not as clean and well managed as when Whiteside had it, and instead of developing into one of Blackpool's big hotels, it lost patronage and dwindled out of existence.

At this time (1750) there were only about two dozen small huts in Blackpool and an inn where now stands the Clifton Hotel.

While, from the middle of the eighteenth century, the world was going on with its silly wars—Britain was fighting France—started by the few bigwigs on both sides who had always craft enough to get others to do the fighting while they sat in safety and scooped the spoil, for even the great Jack Churchill, who was made Duke of Marlborough (whose descendants or kin draw big incomes to-day from estates given, in addition to his enormous pay, to their military and profiteering ancestor for his doubtful services to his country but far less doubtful service to himself) took bribes for army contracts—and its inventions for furthering civilisation, or making trade (these peaceful pioneers by no means reaping reward like the slaughter-makers and tax-multipliers), as well as its institutions for the paupers largely due

CH PUBLIC LIBRARIES.

to defects of that civilisation—workhouses were inaugurated in 1723 (Kirkham being one of the first places to erect one, in 1726), and the poet Gray was writing his solemnly beautiful " Elegy in a Country Churchyard " (1747), Goldsmith his poems of " The Traveller " and " The Deserted Village " (1764 and 1770), Sheridan his comedy of " The School for Scandal," Dr. Isaac Watts his hymns, and Wesley and Whitfield were stirring the soul of the nation with their live Christian preaching, and the British Museum, that amazing storehouse of relics of the

Blackpool about 1750-60 (from Talbot Square to Church Street).

world's history, began (1753), and squires and landlords were getting public commons enclosed and laid out—mostly to their own profit—Layton Hawes, old common land, was enclosed by Squire Fleetwood and others in 1771, the little village of Blackpool was slowly growing in size and reputation. Newspapers, those disseminators of daily gossip and knowledge, those influential media for advertisement—little Blackpool soon found out their value and made use of them,

as we shall presently see,—were being started in Liverpool, Manchester, and Warrington—a town notable for its early work in the newspaper and book world. The " Manchester Weekly Journal," started in 1719, became " Whitworth's Magazine " in 1737. In 1752 began the " Manchester Mercury " and the " Manchester Advertiser." Liverpool had the " Courant " in 1712, and the " Advertiser " in 1756. In 1744 the " Preston Journal " was started, but failed. But side by side with these bright progressive signs were darker things, shameful things. Liverpool ships were engaged in the black slave trade, and Liverpool merchants regarded it as legitimate business to make money by capturing and selling the natives of Africa—tearing mothers and children apart for ever on earth—as advertisements in the Liverpool papers (1765), of negro men, women, and boys and girls, to be sold by auction in Liverpool, disgracefully show. Not till seventy years later did England make that noble law abolishing its slave trade and bravely declaring that any slave who set his foot in our land should be free.

ROADS AND COACHES.

As you will bear in mind, there were no railway trains yet, and all travelling was done in horse-vehicles, and the roads were nothing like they are to-day. In summer they were all ruts, and in winter deep puddles. Visitors to Blackpool in those days would get some tremendous joltings, and the rough highways were responsible for many breakdowns. In the year 1770 a gentleman named Arthur Young travelled in Lancashire and Yorkshire, and wrote a book called " A Tour Through the North of England." He did not get to Blackpool, but he describes the road between Wigan and Preston thus: " I know not in the whole range of language terms sufficiently expressive to describe this infernal road . . . let me most seriously caution all travellers to avoid it as they would the devil, for a thousand to one but they break

their necks or their limbs by overthrows or breaking-downs. They will meet with ruts, which I actually measured, four feet deep, and floating with mud, only from a wet summer. What therefore must it be after a winter, The only mending it in places receives is the tumbling-in of some loose stones which serve no other purpose but jolting a carriage in the most intolerable manner. These are not merely opinions, but facts, for I actually passed three carts broken down in these eighteen miles of execrable memory."

Poor Mr. Young seems to have been badly upset by that road in every way. And that was the main road, from Liverpool to Wigan, Preston and Lancaster. What, then, would be the state of the minor roads into the Fylde—to Kirkham, Poulton and Blackpool?

But the condition of the roads was not the only peril. The highways were infested with robbers. Dick Turpin, and other notorious highwaymen, held up coaches and plundered travellers in those days (1750 to 1800). It would be almost as exciting as living in film-land, wouldn't it?

WATERWAYS.

Perhaps because the roads were so bad, as well as the fact that carriage by water was cheaper, a Lancashire gentleman, the Duke of Bridgewater, of Worsley, had the idea to make canals, such as he had seen in France and Italy. At any rate, waterways would not be quite so rutty and bumpy as the land-roads, though the sea-tracks can be jolty enough at times, as those know who have crossed the ocean, or even only had a trip in stormy weather to the Isle of Man. But water, especially when put in canals, has decidedly the advantage over soil and stone as "road metal."

Romantically, there is a tale of a love disappointment in connection with the Duke of Bridgewater's devotion to canal-making. After a difference with his fiancee, the famous beauty, Elizabeth, Duchess

of Hamilton (a widow), he gave the lady up and turned his attention to making canals in Lancashire. In 1761, the first boat-load of coal passed along the new canal from Worsley to Manchester. The canals resulted in the cheapening of food and goods, as they could take loads at less cost than the roads. By and by, as we shall see, they were also used for passenger traffic, until the railways came and ousted them.

No canal was ever made close to Blackpool. The nearest is the Preston and Garstang Canal, running through the east of the Fylde, a dozen miles from Blackpool.

TOWER WINDMILLS.

There was another invention destined to transform Lancashire, and the world, and largely to create those great industrial centres from which our Blackpool of to-day draws its millions of visitors—the steam-engine, devised, or at least perfected, in 1769, by James Watt, who, according to the trite tradition, as a boy in Scotland had watched the steam lifting the lid of the kettle on the fire, and pondered how to capture and utilise that wonderful force for the service of man. The steam-engine was the root of the factory system, of the transformation of Lancashire from an agricultural shire, with a little weaving and spinning at home on small hand-driven machines, to a great manufacturing county, " the workshop of the world " with Blackpool as its pleasure ground by the sea—as well as the foundation of all the subsequent steam developments, the locomotive, the Atlantic liner, and all the thousands of machines to-day driven by the harnessed power of boiling water—Nature's force subject to the thought of man, for without thinking there would have never been any steam engine. The boiling pan was of no use till the brain-pan got hold of it—so really (as has been remarked before), it is the brain-pan that is the source of all our developments and progress.

Soon after the invention of the steam-engine, Arkwright built his first factory at Cromford (1771)

and the modern factory system, with all its early horrors of child-slavery, began. Before the utilisation of steam, the factories, only small ones, were driven by water-wheels, and about this time turn-pike roads, with toll gates, were first made. Most of these toll bars are now abolished, though there are still three in the Fylde—Shard Bridge and Cartford Bridge, over the River Wyre, and the toll gate on Freckleton Marsh.

It may be noted, too, that about this time, 1770-1800, most of the brick tower windmills in the Fylde and neighbourhood were erected, in place of the older wooden mills. The revolving dome and other improvements were devised. Prior to this, all the windmills were wooden " peg " mills, such as may still be seen in the eastern counties of England, and, till this year, at Warton, near Lytham. This Warton mill, now demolished, was the last " peg " mill in Lancashire. Some of the Fylde tower windmills have the date of their erection carved on them. Thornton mill, for instance, was built in 1796.

Also, the old Bispham Church was pulled down in 1773, and a new one, retaining the Norman porch with the zodiacal signs, put up in its place. There is now a third church, a larger and more modern building, erected in 1883 on the site of the first and second churches.

XIV.

BLACKPOOL GETS ON THE MAP.

Blackpool, as a town, first figures on the maps in the year 1751. The " black pool " had been marked on previous maps, but in 1751, Emmanuel Bowen, the geographer, puts on his map of the County of Lancaster, the definite name thus, " Black Pool Town," not village, mind you, but town, though it was but a very small place of about thirty cottages, and not a single shop, the nearest market and shops being at Poulton, then a much bigger place than Blackpool. Thornber says (in a letter to a South Shore gentleman, published in the " Lytham Standard," July 21st, 1905), that there was only one sashed window in Blackpool (about 1780-90), the others being leaded windows. There were two inns, Bonny's and the Gynn, and only a score or so of cottages. Bonny's Hotel was near where Bonny Street is—this street being the original sea-front.

So, while Pitt, and Fox, and Burke were prominent figures in the House of Commons and the political sphere, while Captain Cook was making his great voyages of discovery round the world (his book was one of my boyhood's delights), and the American War of Independence resulted in the severance of our American Colonies (now the United States) from Britain—the stupid fault of the King and his advisers—(1775), while Isaac Newton was making his wonderful scientific discoveries, and Robert Raikes, out of love for the poor children in the streets, started the first Sunday School at Gloucester, and the French had begun the conquest of the air by inventing the first balloon and sending it up successfully in Paris (1783), coaches began to run from Manchester to Blackpool, as the following announcement, from the " Manchester Mercury " of June 3rd, 1783, shows:—" The Manchester and Blackpool Coach, from the Upper Royal

Oak, Market Street Lane, Manchester, begins to run on Monday, the 9th of June, and every morning (Sunday excepted) at 6 o'clock, through Bolton, Chorley, Preston, etc. Performed by Math. Pickford, Pointon; Jas. Weights, Bolton; Thos. Cooper, Bull Inn, Preston."

On 6th July, 1784, the following advertisement appears in the same paper:—"Lower Swan Inn, Market Street Lane. The Manchester and Black Pool Coach sets out from the above inn every Monday, Wednesday, and Friday morning, at 6 o'clock, dinner at Mr. Cooper's, the Black Bull Inn, Preston, where it meets a diligence which proceeds to the Black Pool the same eve. Inside from Manchester to Black Pool 14s. Performed by Mess. Dixon, Cooper, and Co."

FIRST ADVERTISEMENTS.

As you see, the fifty miles journey from Manchester to Blackpool took a full day—about 12 hours, in the horse-drawn coaches, but no doubt the passengers found it an interesting and enjoyable ride. Lancashire was almost all rural world then. There were no factories and foundries and smoky towns on the route, nothing much but farms and old halls and fields and Rivington Pike and Darwen Moors and Longridge Fells on the eastern skyline. There would be, as we may guess from the state of the roads, a good deal of bumping and shaking, and considerable grousing from the elder passengers—but the younger ones, especially if they were lovers, wouldn't much mind, as when one is young, and Cupid is king of hearts, all roads, however jolty and upsetting, run through Paradise to the Garden of Eden. Besides, the antics of the coach would give excuse for the protection of masculine arms to feminine waists, and I am sure these old coaches—if we could only resurrect them, or summon their spirits—could tell many romantic tales as well as a few merry yarns and maybe some exciting adventures.

Then Blackpool itself, developing that sense of the value of publicity which is its enterprising characteristic to-day, began to advertise its attractions in the "Manchester Mercury" of July 18th, 1786, as follows:—"Blackpool Concerts,—On Monday, the 14th, Wed. 16th, Friday 18th of August, will be three concerts of music under the direction of Mr. Burchell, with the assistance of the Musical Society of Gentlemen in Preston. Mr. Buckley (already mentioned 12th January, 1779, in this paper) is engaged as first violin, Mrs. Shepley as principal vocal performer. Tickets at 2s. 6d. each may be had at the inns in Blackpool, where the particulars of each concert will be delivered previous to the performances."

THE SWEET LITTLE VILLAGE BY THE SEA.

Blackpool, you see, began its advertising career with musical announcements—a very modest beginning, and yet out of that small start have evolved our gigantic Musical Festival and our famous Tower, Winter Gardens, and Pier Concerts.

One wonders what Mr. Buckley, the first violin, played, and what songs Mrs. Shepley sang—how interesting a copy of the programme of those concerts would be. But obviously none was printed. A list of items was written out and posted up in the two or three inns. We are not even told where the concert was held—probably in the transformed and decorated old barn which tradition says was the first Blackpool theatre. But there would no doubt be some of Handel's opera music, and maybe some of the old English songs of Horn and Purcell and Byrd, and others, such little gems as "I saw a lady sweet and kind," "Drink to me only with thine eyes," and others, even yet unbeaten by our more elaborate composers, and far transcending the products of our modern song-factories, which turn out jingles as if by machinery.

It was a sweet little Blackpool in those days, with its grassy promenade over the green cliffs, and

its old thatched inns, and the windmills beyond the fields, and the sea murmuring a refrain to the music of the fiddlers and the singers. One can fancy the famous Mr. Buckley, the first violin, a man renowned, in his day, as we have seen, in his black velvet coat and knee breeches, and red-heeled boots (if times were good)—one can see him taking a bit of resin out of his pocket and tuning up his violin, and then one sees Mrs. Shepley—just "Mrs.," mind you—no "Madame" then—what was she like, now?—was she a soprano or contralto?—and one hears her voice—and lo! it is all over a hundred years ago, and the fiddler and singer are long gone to dust, and their names are forgotten except when such scribes as I rake them up to tell a tale of the past to our generation. Do you ever think, as you walk by our Blackpool water, what thousands and thousands of voices have come and gone to the murmur of those waves, even as the oceanic rune will still be going on when your voices and mine, like millions of others that have laughed and sung in the sunshine and the moonlight by this sea, shall mingle with its strange deep song no more?

Thus, from barbarian men of the Stone Age, and Ancient Britons, and others, with their rude weapons, and no amusements but hunting or playing with stones, has our Blackpool evolved to bowling-greens and archery butts, and fiddlers and singers, and the beginnings of those entertainments which are to-day unrivalled in the world.

But not only in the matter of shows and sports has the world developed, for if that were all it would not be much, but in other and greater things, in equity, in fair-play, in justice, in the abolition of cruel punishments, in tolerance, in philanthropy, in care for the afflicted and unfortunate, in righteous fellowship, in noble ethical and religious ideas.

Yet there are people, unseeing, unthinking people, who say our race has made none of that which is embodied in the word that is Blackpool's motto, "Progress."

XV.

TRAVELLING TO BLACKPOOL IN THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURY.

Picture a family setting off from Manchester for Blackpool for a holiday by the sea on a fine summer morning about the year 1785. There is puffy Pater, merchant, fat and flourishing; mild Mater, acquiring indolent adiposity; their daughter, sweet seventeen, or let us say heavenly eighteen, rosy and sweet in her bonnet and new gown, and her brothers, the two restless boys, aged respectively fourteen and thirteen. They get in the stage coach, all going inside, though the restless boys would much prefer the top outside, as all boys naturally would, for there is so much more to be seen from that altitude. On the top are some rather seedy individuals, gentlemen of showy, though shabby apparel, and self-possessed ostentatious ladies, in feathers fine if rather faded—evidently members of a travelling theatrical company that is going to Blackpool, or Lytham, or Poulton, to see how much wind can be raised by the sea during the summer. Puffy Pater, glancing up at the sky, wonders if the day will keep free from wet. They have no umbrellas with them, for that rain-shield for the human form has only just about been invented, and not yet got to Lancashire.

Heavenly Eighteen sits in the top corner of the coach, next to Mild Mater and the Restless Boys. Opposite her sits Susceptible Spark, a stranger, of course, a young man of twenty or thereabouts, smart in his velvet knee-breeches and blue hose and silver-buckled shoon. Heavenly Eighteen admires his charming cravat, wonders if he is going to Blackpool and begins to weave romance in the happy young brain behind the pretty face and shining demure eyes.

So the coach sets off, with its four galloping horses, and jockey-like driver, and the post-boy

behind blowing his horn, and away towards Irlam o' th' Heights and Bolton, along the valley of the Irwell —a fair vale with a clean river in those factoryless days.

It is a great day for the Restless Brothers. They are all eyes for the sights and events of the road. Puffy Pater tells of a highwayman stopping a vehicle on the road over Belmont Moors some years ago. The Restless Brothers wish they were going that way. They would like their coach to be held up by a black-masked robber on horseback with a pistol. It would be a glorious adventure. But nothing of that exciting kind comes their way, and the Restless Brothers think their ride rather tame, though Puffy Pater points out Rivington Pike and other landscape objects, and talks about the balloon ascent of Monsieur Montgolfier, of Paris, and in this account the Restless Brothers display some interest. " A grand invention, this balloon," says Puffy Pater. " Before long we shall be taking trips up in the sky, perhaps to the Moon."

The Restless Brothers are fascinated with the wild possibilities of aerial adventure. They wonder if there are highwaymen up in the heavens, and whether Claude Duvals haunt the Milky Way.

After dinner at Preston, and a change of coaches, they get along towards Clifton Village, and at one place the right front wheel getting into a deep rut, the vehicle is almost overturned. The actresses on the top outside scream—one of them swears—and inside, Heavenly Eighteen is pitched across into the lap of Susceptible Spark, who ardently wishes she could remain there for the rest of the journey, but she blushingly disentangles herself and resumes her own seat, with a smile that bores a red-hot hole in the heart of Susceptible Spark, who, after their colliding bomb-like introduction, tries to open a jerky conversation with modest miss, whilst Mild Mater seriously surveys him and takes his measure, and Puffy Pater fiercely gives his opinions on vile roads, exclaiming, " Stap my vitals —We shall be lucky if we are not

Coaching to Blackpool about 1785.

killed before we get to Blackpool, damme!" And he takes a pinch of snuff out of his horn snuff-box, while Mild Mater gives him a reproachful look for his language, and Heavenly Eighteen, in her delicious day-dreams, wonders if she will meet Susceptible Spark on the green promenade or golden sands at Blackpool, pleasantly indulging in all a maiden's merry fancies, for in those days, as in ours, and in all days known to human history, the way of a man and a maid was the most fascinating and engrossing affair in the world.

So the coach passes the old windmill at Kirkham, and gets along the bumpy highway towards Marton, and along Whitegate Lane, past the old "No. 3" Inn, with its archery butts, and so down to the Lane Ends Inn by the sea, and both Heavenly Eighteen and Susceptible Spark are secretly delighted to find that Blackpool is their mutual goal, and wondering what sweet things will come of their holiday—a mere summer flirtation, or a mating that will be for all seasons?

SEASIDE ATTRACTIONS IN 1785.

And what amusements and recreations do the Blackpool visitors find in the reign of King George the Third? Certainly no Tower, no Winter Gardens, no palatial ballrooms, no piers, and not a single picture-show.

Bathing was a feature. On June 14th, 1785, the following advertisement appears in the "Manchester Mercury":—"Lawrence Bailey takes the liberty of acquainting the Public that he has completely furnished and fitted up a commodious genteel house in an eligible situation and that he hopes by his accommodations to merit the encouragement of such ladies and gentlemen as may be pleased to favour him with their company. N.B.—A bathing machine will be kept for the use of his friends."

Lawrence Bailey rightly described his Inn as in "an eligible situation." He was a lucky man, and planted his business well for those who should follow

him. His little inn developed into Bailey's Hotel, now the Hotel Metropole, the only building on the seaward side of the promenade, the only house that ever got there.

The announcements of other caterers show how Blackpool was making a name as a holiday resort at this time. John Bonny (Bonny's Hotel) advertises in May, 1787, that " he has built a very large dining-room, with lodging room for 20 beds, in addition to the house lately occupied by his father-in-law, Mr. Bickerstaff, for the reception of families during the bathing season. Ladies and gentlemen 2s. 2d. per day each, children 1s. 6d. Servants 1s. 6d. Table beer included. Horses, hay, and grass per night 8d.," and in the same year a Mr. Sharples advertises 18 bed-rooms, stabling for 16 horses, and other conveniences, at 2d. a day less than Bonny (thus began competition), while Thomas Lewtas advertises the " Commodious and well-established Lane Ends Inn," 70 beds, barn, stabling, and 12 to 30 acres of land, all at a " fair valuation," to be " let for a term of years by private contract."

In 1788-90 there were fifty houses in Blackpool, two small bowling-greens, and a theatre in a barn.

In 1796, William Smith had the Lane Ends Hotel and advertised " bed and breakfast 10d., dinner with malt liquor 1s. 9d., afternoon tea 10d., supper with malt liquor 1s. 3d., single lodging room per night 6d.," which prices, " he flatters himself, will not be considered exorbitant."

Thus, while Goldsmith's beautiful rural idyll, " The Vicar of Wakefield," came to delight its readers (1766), the Frenchman Mesmer astonished Europe with his book on " Animal Magnetism " (1766), later called " mesmerism," and in our time " hypnotism," now a well-demonstrated fact, for, apart from this strange will-influence (which all powerful preachers, singers, and writers have) upon persons, is there not a decided hypnotism exercised by places, such as Blackpool, the hygienic hypnotist that delightfully draws the world? Also, at this time, that noble soul, John Howard, pitying those in prison, spent

five years, 1770-1775, visiting British jails, where the conditions were cruel and vile, used his fortune of £30,000 in pleading for more humane treatment for the weak and unfortunate, and printed at Warrington his book advocating prison reform; while our American Colonies, under George Washington, had separated from Britain and established the United States (1776), and Benjamin Franklin, philosopher and scientist, had found out how to safeguard buildings by lightning conductors. Adam Smith published his "Wealth of Nations," introducing into political economy the idea that "labour is the source of all wealth," and individual freedom and international free exchange are the best foundations of industry and commerce; William Blake, poet, painter, and mystic, was busy with pen and brush; the parson-poet Crabbe, was writing his realistic rhyming tales of the starving drudgery and degradation of village life and the hardships of the farm labourer; the poet Cowper, author of "John Gilpin's Ride," published "The Task" (1785), and Scotland's lyrical darling, Robert Burns, lover of lasses and of good fellowship, and compassionate friend, not only of suffering humanity, but of all live creatures, treating even the daisy as a sweet living thing, was publishing his songs (1786); these poets, Burns, Blake, Cowper, and other writers, singing the love of Nature, and inaugurating those ideas of brotherhood and humanity which create the highest ideal of mankind, while little Blackpool was becoming renowned for its sea-bathing and marine charms.

STRICTLY MORAL BATHING.

It is also pleasant to record that it was a place of strict propriety. Our Heavenly Eighteen and the Susceptible Spark would not have been allowed to bathe together. William Hutton, of Birmingham, a gentleman who visited Blackpool in 1788, and wrote a pleasant little book entitled "A Description of Blackpool, in Lancashire, frequented for Sea-Bathing" (we have previously referred to it), tells of

a regulation that was as droll as decorous. Special separate times were appointed for ladies to bathe. The ringing of a bell was the signal for the gentlemen to clear off the beach while the ladies had their shy dip. Any gentleman who was caught on the shore while the fair ones splashed about with Father Neptune was fined a bottle of wine. One would like to know how much wine was sold on the occasion of the ladies taking the sea. If masculine human nature in those days was anything like it is in ours, one suspects that the bottle fines would augment considerably the takings of the landlords. The same procedure was observed when the gentlemen bathed. When the ladies—there wouldn't be many, for the total visitors then did not number more than five hundred in the season, not so many as are nowadays brought to Blackpool by one train—had been drawn off the sands in the bathing-vans, and cleared away, the bell rang for the gentlemen to take their turn in the water, and, of course, not a lady came near the beach, or even peeped out of the inn windows, while the bashful males were playing with the waves.

One wonders would those ladies and gentlemen of the eighteenth century be shocked if they could see the mixed bathing customs and costumes of 1923, and would their verdict be "progress" or "deterioration"?

WIGAN AS A HEALTH RESORT.

What other amusements had the Blackpool visitors of a hundred and odd years ago (1788)? Hutton, after informing us that our sea-bathing village consisted of about fifty houses, half-a-dozen of which conspicuously fronted the sea and were " appropriate for the reception of company," others in the background being the dwellings of the humble natives, and the rest scattered along the cliffs, north towards the Gynn and south towards Fox Hall, then a farm-house, tells us that the visitors passed the time in horse-riding on the splendid stretch of sand, towards Lytham in one direction and Rossall in the other, in

bathing, and strolling on the Parade, a grass walk with white railings, 6 yards wide and 200 yards long (contrast that with our great promenade to-day) from about the present sea-end of Church Street to the present New Inn, and he describes " beauty and fashion," the ladies in flowered silk or cotton skirts and elegant feathered high hats, and the gentlemen in knee-breeches, three-cornered hats and buckled shoes. He adds that for a change one could go to Preston for the Derby races, or to witness the cock-fights there, as also at Poulton, or—open your eyes and gasp for breath!—go to drink the curing waters at Wigan!

You never dreamt that Wigan was once a health resort, did you? It is true that variety hall artistes to-day sometimes tickle their audiences by comic references to Wigan pier, but no one ever suspected—and perhaps least of all the humorists themselves—that Wigan (around which at any rate there is some beautiful scenery) once aspired to become a fashionable holiday health resort and a rival to the famous Bath. Yet such is the fact. Old records show that a medicinal spring of " sulphur water " was discovered at Wigan, and on August 15, 1786, " Wigan Spa " was inaugurated with great pomp and ceremony. But that venture came to naught, and what a good job for Blackpool that it did—otherwise the bulk of our millions of visitors might to-day have been going to Wigan for their holidays and health.

Other Blackpool amusements were archery, bowls, sailing, and card-parties in the evening.

THEATRICAL FARE.

There were also, as we have already seen, concerts and theatrical performances in an embellished old barn. It is said the " house " when full would hold the tremendous amount of £6 (how would Mr. Harrop or Mr. Huddlestone like that colossal figure in their pay-boxes at the Grand Theatre and Opera House?). The old tithebarn (in Tithebarn Street) at

Old Pinfold, Crook Gate, Hambleton, near Blackpool.

The Old Tithebarn, similar to one at Blackpool (used in 18th century as a Theatre), at Poulton.

Poulton was also a theatre at this time, when many of Blackpool's visitors lodged at Poulton (3¾ miles away), as it was the fashionable place. The first dramatic piece ever played at Blackpool was a forgotten tragedy entitled "Sussarian and Dolan" (I confess that with all my literary knowledge I know nothing of the play or its author, but it seems to me, to judge from the names of the characters, to have been something the matter between a Welshman and an Irishman). I would dearly like to know if Heavenly Eighteen and Susceptible Spark saw that play and what they said about it as they walked home in the moonlight on the little parade—200 yards long. But perhaps they had other things to talk about than plays. Maybe a sweet budding romance of their own—and the actual live drama in which you are hero and heroine can give the most glorious plays and novels ever written a long start and then easily beat them by infinite lengths.

None of Blackpool's early playbills has come down to us, but one printed at Bury about this period (1795) tells us of another drama of that time. It advertises "The Fair Penitent," to be prefaced with "an address wrote to the ladies and gentlemen of Bury" by Mr. Johnson (the leading actor) and spoken to by his wife, Mrs. Johnson, the actress. A "Master Johnson" also figures in the cast. The same bill announces also a short comedy, "The Scolding Wife or the Henpeckt Husband"—showing us that female connubial tyranny is no new affliction of mankind, but probably as old as Adam—which no doubt was played at Blackpool, and one would like to have the opinions of Heavenly Eighteen and Susceptible Spark on that irreverent letting the cat out of the bag as regards holy matrimony.

A few years earlier (1779), Blackpool visitors might have had the excitement of seeing the ship of the renowned Paul Jones, privateer, off the coast, for he was at that time seeking to prey on merchant vessels in the Irish Sea.

As for the Sunday, there were then no places of worship one could attend in Blackpool. The nearest church was at Bispham.

But, during the " season," there was a " Sunday Fair " or " Wakes," every fortnight, near the Lane Ends, and old records state that it was a rowdy and sometimes a disorderly affair.

THE DEMON OF MARTON MOSS.

Hutton mentions Pennystone Rock (in 1788), and the tradition about it—in fact, he is the first writer to tell the tale, though it is not clear, from his narrative, whether he himself visited the celebrated stone to investigate or only relates hearsay. He says " according to tradition, a public-house some years back stood by the stone . . . and that iron hooks had been fixed in the stone to which travellers tied their horses while they drank their penny pots, from whence the stone acquired, and still bears the name of Penny-stone." He adds that the hooks had then long been gone (1788).

That's the beginning of the Pennystone legends (in print, anyhow). Hutton mentions no " rings " on the stone, he distinctly says " hooks," and even those had disappeared. How the vanished hooks afterwards re-appeared as rings (invisible rings, I fear) is one of the mysteries of history as difficult to solve as the secret of the " man in the iron mask."

There is also a " demon of Marton Moss "—the old peaty sea-bed six miles long and one mile broad, and now a place of market gardens—referred to by the old recorders and gossips of Blackpool's early days. The inhabitants of Marton Moss were plagued by a strange, severe malady peculiar to that locality. It chilled them to the marrow and set them all of a cold shiver. The superstitious attributed it to a demon, who haunted the Moss and whose evil breath was in the white mists that crept over the fields at nights. But in reality the demon was the ague, caused by the swampy district. Drainage and sanitation have driven that demon away.

XVI.

BLACKPOOL'S FIRST POST OFFICE.

The last quarter of the eighteenth century was a time of change, upheavals, transformations, wars, and revolutions. It was the beginning of our modern England, born out of advancing ideas, of civic and religious and industrial struggles and emancipations, broadening of freedom, increase of inventions, with the inevitable clash of the old and the new, the conflict between ancient privileges and young demands for the natural liberties of life. The steam-engine inaugurated a great industrial reconstruction, turning England, especially the North and Midlands, from an agricultural country into a manufacturing area, with consequent workmen's agitations and combinations for wages and conditions of labour. Wesleyanism, like Moses, struck the rock of petrified theology, whence issued streams of revivalism that became rivers of sect.

The new ideal of mankind as one family, and of nations as republican commonwealths, preached by some philosophers in France (by Rousseau, Voltaire, and others) and sung by some English poets (Cowper, Burns, Southey, Shelley, Wordsworth, and others), started modern democracy, with all its various movements. The cruel and short-sighted tyrannies of monarchs and aristocracies and the ruling classes (read Dickens' " Tale of Two Cities " and Carlyle's " French Revolution "), the money-greed of the factory capitalists, along with the landowning and farming oppression of the agricultural labourer, caused the downtrodden and overburdened to revolt, with the inevitable violent extremes that accompany such regrettable methods of seeking justice and relief. There were machine-breaking riots and rick-burnings, and monstrously heavy punishments, transportations and executions of the poor wretches—the turning worms—goaded and driven to desperation and excess by hunger and misery.

In 1776, the British Colonies (as already mentioned) kicked against the unfair taxation levies of Britain, fought for independence, and won it. In 1789 the French Revolution let hell loose, and the French King and his wife, and thousands of nobles and gentry, perished by the newly-invented guillotine (adopted by the French Government in 1792 as the State method of capital punishment). In 1790, Thomas Paine, much maligned as an atheist, which he was not, for he was a Deist, believing in God, enunciating his creed in this noble phrase, "The world is my country and to do good is my religion," a man who sought to lead mankind into paths of peace and good-neighbourliness, though he was certainly a tireless opponent of kingcraft and priestcraft, published his book "The Rights of Man." Of the troublesome period in which he lived he wrote, "These are the times that try men's souls." Then in 1789 there was the Irish Rebellion, the time the Irish bard, Thomas Moore, was writing his songs, ending in the execution of that beloved hero of Erin, scholar and gentleman, Robert Emmett, and from this time date the "United Irishmen's Clubs" and "Orange Clubs," whose silly creed bigotry and murderous mischief are still filling our sister isle with terror and woe to-day.

Curiously enough, in this period also, Paley issued his book, "Evidences of Christianity" (1794), and the cynic, pointing to the unchristian hatred and havoc all round, would say that such a volume was certainly very urgently needed at the moment in such a mad world.

Now also comes the renowned Napoleon on the scene, suppressing risings in Paris, straightening out the revolution, and paving his ambitious way to Emperorship, while Lord Nelson, Britain's naval king, is defeating the Spanish Fleet (1797), and there are riots in England because of the hungry poverty and the high cost of living, due to the heavy taxation caused by war.

THE PEA-SOUP WRECK.

Amid all these wars and revolutions and changes, amid them as far as time is concerned, yet out of them

as regards place, bonny little Blackpool, in its quiet green corner of flowery Windmill Land, by the golden-shored sea, " far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife " (as poet Gray wrote in this same half-century), went on growing happily, giving simple serenity to its few score cottagers and health and joy to its few hundred visitors.

Sometimes, especially in the storms of winter, it had its thrills and excitements, chiefly from wrecks. The tale of all the shipping disasters on our Fylde coast is a long one, especially before the coming of the lifeboat. In the year 1775 a great ship, an East Indaman, called the " Travers," laden with lace and silk and other precious wares, was wrecked on our coast, and the natives helped themselves to the goods cast ashore. For years afterwards " Travers lace " was to be found in the houses of the Fylde. In 1796, when Napoleon was threatening to invade England, though there was little likelihood of the little combative Corsican Corporal ever trying to effect a landing on the Fylde coast, there were watchers on the dunes, and beacons ready to fire into blazing signal (one at Beryl Hill, Warbreck Road) if any signs of the approach of the dreaded " Boney "—with whose terrible name mothers used to scare their refractory children—were seen in our waters.

In the winter of 1779 there was a wreck that brought deliverance to the Blackpool and Fylde villages suffering from a famine owing to poor harvests. A ship laden with peas came ashore in a gale, and its cargo was strewn on the beach. For weeks and weeks afterwards peas were the diet, peas cooked in every form, for variety. For a generation this year was known in Blackpool as " Pea-soup Year."

In similar way came the first potatoes to Lancashire, though not to Blackpool. The tubers brought from America by Sir Walter Raleigh were long cultivated in Ireland before they got to England. From a wreck in the 17th century in the Ribble Mouth opposite Lytham at North Meols (Southport developed afterwards in this parish), potatoes came into Lanca-

shire. From North Meols district they soon reached the Fylde, which is a great potato-growing region.

THE FYLDE METROPOLIS.

Till towards the end of the eighteenth century there were no shops in Blackpool. Provisions were fetched from Poulton, then a much bigger place than Blackpool, with five times its population. Poulton was also, at this time, the centre of society and fashion for the Fylde. Most of the gentry put up at Poulton, which had its comfortable hotels, reading-room, and its theatre, in the old Tithe Barn near the Parish Church. There is a tradition that the Prince Regent (afterwards crowned as King George IV.), came to Mains Hall (near Poulton), to woo Mistress Fitzherbert, a relative of the Fitzherbert-Brockholes' family, dwelling at the old hall. The Poulton visitors made short trips, in coach or on horseback, to Blackpool for bathing. On the Poulton road, just before you come to Carlton Crossing, on the left, you may still see, by the garden wall, the horse-steps, for ladies to mount their steeds, at Gezzert's farm, originally "Gazette" farm, as there is a tradition that it was an inn, and people resorted there to read the little "Gazette" (a London paper of those days—not our own "Gazette," for that was not yet born). You may also see these horse-steps on other old roads in the Fylde,—going towards Underbank, between Carlton and Little Thornton (the old highway near the Wyre), and in front of the old "Eagle and Child" Inn, Weeton.

There were also "pinfolds," or "pounds," little stone-walled enclosures where straying cattle were put till their owners claimed them. The man who looked after the "pinfold" was called a "pinder." An old ballad tells of a fight with staves between Robin Hood and the Pinder of Wakefield. Blackpool pinfold stood at the top of Chapel Street, near the site of the present Wellington Hotel. Remains of pinfolds in the Fylde may be seen at Great Eccleston (opposite the blacksmith's), and at Pilling (on the path across the fields from the village to Skippool). But the best specimen

Old " Horse Steps " near Tarn Gate, Little Thornton.

(See Page 144.)

(Photo by Rowland Hill.)

The " Sirene,"

Wrecked on the hulking near the North Pier, Oct. 9th, 1892.

(See Page 209.)

PUBLIC

is to be found near Crook Gate on the lane running from Rawcliffe to Pilling (on the right hand from Rawcliffe). It is in almost as perfect condition as it was a hundred years ago, and is the only sample thus preserved in all the north of Lancashire—one of the very few pinfolds still left in England.

I hardly need say there were no lamps on the roads at that time. Gas had not yet been discovered. Nor even matches. You had to make a light by means of flint and tinder. Instead of match boxes you carried a little box with a bit of dry rag and wood-dust in it, and if you wanted a light you had to strike a spark from the hard piece of flint you also carried, and patiently try to ignite the tinder. Fancy the job a man would have to light his pipe. Matches were not invented till the nineteenth century. A very simple thing a match seems to us, because so comman now, yet if a Stone Age man could have seen a child strike a match, it would have been the most wonderful thing in the world, startling and amazing.

The "bellman," with his great coat and three-cornered hat, looking rather like a church beadle, was also a picturesque and familiar figure in those days, indeed, well on into the latter half of the nineteenth century. His function was to ring a bell in the street, and then announce articles lost or found, even lost children, and make other public notices, such as a husband's advertisement that he would not be responsible for debts contracted by his wife—this was called "notchill crying" in Lancashire.

SELLING WIVES.

Wives were also sold in the public market-place in those days. If a man was tired of his spouse he took her to the market and sold her to the highest bidder. No doubt it was a swifter and simpler and cheaper way than our modern divorce and made less garbage for newspapers of the scavenging order, but it shows that women, according to the old notion prevalent for thousands of years, were regarded as mere goods and chattels, like chairs and poultry and cattle,

the enslaved property of the husband, to be disposed of at his whim or will. No doubt many a wife thus sold was well rid of a callous or worthless husband. But women since then have shown that they are to be counted as something more than beasts or toys of lust. Now they have not only the Married Women's Property Act but the Vote.

About the year 1800 there is a record of a wife being sold by her husband, who was on the spree, in Rochdale open market. He asked two shillings for her. One of the male bystanders, liking the looks of the distressed girl (for she was not twenty) offered to purchase her, and, having no money, ran home for his mother's family Bible and pawned it to buy the wife on sale. It is good to tell that the woman and her new man lived happily together and brought up a family well. The wife who was sold got the best of the bargain. The husband who sold her drank himself to death. Thomas Hardy, the Wessex novelist, builds up his great tragic story, "The Mayor of Casterbridge," on a similar incident.

As there are no chronicles of wife-selling in old Blackpool (though one wonders what would happen if it were a custom in the town to-day), we may assume that Blackpool wives and husbands had little fault to find with each other in the eighteenth century.

BLACKPOOL'S FIRST POSTMASTER.

The American War of Independence (1776) has been mentioned. It was responsible for bringing to Blackpool a dandy character renowned in his day as the Beau Nash of the little holiday resort. His name was George Cooke or Cook (on his grave it is spelt thus, but in his advertisements there is a final "e"), and he proudly has it recorded on his tombstone in Bispham Churchyard (1820) that he was a Briton. The inscription is as follows:—"George Cook and his wife Eleanor. Both natives of this island."

Reading between the lines, and remembering Cooke's advent at Blackpool, about 1777-80, there is ground for assuming that this man, a loyalist, dis-

pleased with our American colonies forming a republic, perhaps making himself unpopular in the States by denouncing the separation, quitted the America to which he had gone to make his home, and returned to settle in England, and we find that such was the case. Thornber in his history says Cooke was an "American loyalist driven from his home during the revolutionary wars." At any rate, it is plain that he took care to make clear on his tombstone the fact that though he had come from America to live in Blackpool he was no American rebel but "a native of this island."

He was fond of sartorial elegance, in short, a "buck," the best-dressed man, the "Beau Nash," in the Blackpool of his day.

That was a hundred and forty years ago. Now our beau and his fine apparel are dust, "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity," saith the pessimistic preacher (in Ecclesiastes). Perhaps if the Preacher (Solomon) had lived a less voluptuous life he would not have been so "fed up" (to quote vivid modern slang), and spoken less soured words. The world is always beautiful and satisfactory to the man who lives wisely and worthily, and grey old age is as good, in another way, as green youth. Even the love of fine clothes is not all vanity, and certainly no sin. It is to some extent a duty to look well to the world, to please it with cleanliness of person and neatness of attire, to dress becomingly, and, if one wishes, picturesquely. The folly, or vanity, is when one makes personal decoration the chief thing instead of a minor matter.

BLACKPOOL'S FIRST LIBRARY.

But George Cooke was no mere shallow fop. He had the artistic temperament and ideal. He introduced literature into Blackpool. He was the pioneer of Blackpool's reading, its first bookseller. He has the honour of starting Blackpool's first library, a lending library. Of course, quite naturally and quite legiti-

mately, he sought to make a livelihood out of his enterprise, and succeeded. His advertisement reads as follows:—

"Blackpool Public Room.—G. Cooke, having this season added to his library many useful and entertaining books, he requests the subscribers will be so good as to return those they take out of the room as soon as they are perused."

His charge for the loan of books was 1s. 6d. a week, 2s. 6d. a fortnight, 10s. 6d. for the season.

Cooke also started Blackpool's first Post Office on the old site in the present Coronation Street—where now the Labour Bureau is. Thornber tells us that Cooke began by going to Kirkham three times a week during the season for letters. Then he made arrangements with Poulton for a mail-bag (by coach, no railway trains yet). At the little old Post Office, Cooke, to save endless answering of inquirers for letters, had a board, on one side of which was written, "The post is arrived," and on the other, "The post is not yet arrived," which was turned about as needed.

In a small newspaper, costing 4d., the London "General Evening Post," in the year 1792, he had a long advertisement, in which, after thanking the ladies and gentlemen who had patronised him during the past bathing season at Blackpool, he is now open again with teas, coffee, chocolate, sugar, groceries, millinery, newest fashions from London, jewellery, hosiery, confectionery, cabinet ware, bathing costumes and caps (blue and white flannel), perfumes, etc. He adds that in his Public Room he has a library, newspapers, magazines, etc. He then speaks of the twenty miles of sands for horse-riding, good lodging houses, etc.

It would seem that Cooke kept a general stores—certainly a great assortment of articles. Also, he was one of the first to sell groceries, and such an establishment was needed. Before he launched out in that line, provisions had to be fetched from Poulton (as remarked before).

This George Cooke stands out prominent in Blackpool's past as a man of intelligence, energy and enterprise, a notable pioneer, courageously planning and diligently developing the welfare of the town. If Blackpool had had a Mayor in those days (but it did not get its first till nearly a hundred years later) George Cooke well merited the honour of being first citizen because of the progressive work he did in building up Blackpool and its fame.

While others looked only to their own interests and profit, Cooke sought to make Blackpool civilised and renowned. Many men made more money out of the place than he. Many did well for themselves. But none did better for Blackpool.

George Cooke's grave in Bispham's old churchyard is as worthy a civic pilgrimage and commemoration as any Blackpool spot I know, except perhaps the tombstone in the Blackpool Parish Churchyard of Thornber, Blackpool's first historian, as well as inspirer and supporter of its educational and business developments, who was a boy when Cooke was still living as an old man.

VERSE ABOUT BLACKPOOL.

Much poetry, perhaps we had better say verse, has been written—and will be written—about Blackpool, perhaps more than about any other place, as regards quantity, though, of course—not as yet—nothing of the quality that makes classic such songs as " Kirkconnel Lea," " Ye Banks and Braes," " The Lass of Richmond Hill, " "Elegy in a Country Churchyard," " Tintern Abbey," ' The Banks of Yarrow," " The Vale of Avoca," " Killarney," " Cader Idris," " Ash Grove," " On the Banks of Allan Water," " Loch Lomond," etc.

And the poetry about Blackpool began early in its history. About the time Cooke was advertising the town and his wares, Thornber says the following rhyme was written by a visitor—though one wonders if Cooke himself had a hand in it, and suspects that even Thornber touched it up a bit:

BLACKPOOL.

(About 1790).

Of all the gay places of public resort,
At Chatham, or Scarbro', at Bath, or at Court,
There's none like sweet Blackpool, of which I can boast,
So charming the sands and so healthful the coast,
Rheumatics, scorbutics, and scrofulous kind,
Hysterics and vapours, disorders of mind,
By drinking and bathing you're made quite anew,
As thousands have proved and know to be true.
But strange! I relate what has happened of late,
'Tis true though I heard on't but now tete-a-tete,
Still lest you mistake me, I'll fully explain,
Young Cupid, 'tis said, lies hid in yon main,
And philters each wave that rolls to the shore,
A draught daily drunk by the rich and the poor,
The ladies well pleased with a potion so sweet,
Come here in groups their fond lovers to meet,
And gentlemen too, who are friends to the fair,
Come under pretence to enjoy the fresh air.
But where art thou wandering, my runagate Muse?
Don't think I shall follow thy romantic views—
Again sing of Blackpool and what we have there,
No more of thy Cupid, such nonsense forbear.
The houses are many, and all of them stored,
Not one but is able to spread a good board.
At Bonny's and Hull's there's plenty of meat,
Their rooms and their beds are both cleanly and neat.
My friend, Mr. Hudson, stands next in the row,
From Buxton he came, I would have you to know.
The next house is Forshaw's a building enlarged,
Good doings, no doubt, but you're sure to be charged.
The next house is Bailey's, so new and so neat,
Much pains he has taken to make it complete.
It stands on the beach, far detached from the rest,
And with a fine spring of good water is blest.
Old Ned and Old Nanny at Fumbler's Hill
Will board you and lodge you e'en just as you will.
The next house of fame that I now do take in
Is famed Billy Snape's, "Surs," they call it the Gynn.
He keeps a good table and plenty to eat,
With whey in abundance to drink to your meat,
His servants are civil, good-natured, and mild,
You'll find none their like if you search the whole Fylde.

The places mentioned in the above rhyme are shown in an old engraving of Blackpool in 1784, reproduced in Chapter XXI. Fumbler's Hill was where now is Carlton Hotel. The mention of "whey" shows that buttermilk was a common drink. Buttermilk and potatoes used to be a popular dish amongst the working folks. We are daintier in our diet nowadays.

XVII.

BLACKPOOL'S FIRST SCHOOL AND CHURCH.

In the year 1801, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, the wonderful century of invention, not only for peaceful industrial purposes, but for the destructive dreadfulness of war, for it evolved Maxim guns as well as railway trains, and its first quarter singularly, almost uncannily, resembles our own, with its war and effects of war, the population of Blackpool was considerably less than 500, for the figure for the whole district of Layton-cum-Warbreck, in which Blackpool was then included, was only 473, the population of Poulton being nearly double (769). At that time, too, the population of Poulton was increasing at a greater rate than Blackpool, for in 1811, while the population of Blackpool (along with Layton and Warbreck) had only increased by 107, that of Poulton had increased by 137—the respective totals being 580 and 906. But, though ten years later, in 1821, while Poulton had 1,011 population to Blackpool's 749, the ratio of increase was now greater with Blackpool, and soon Poulton's population was left behind by its young rising neighbour. To-day (1922) the contrast is enormous. While Poulton has only about doubled its population during the last hundred years, Blackpool has increased it a hundred-fold—the figures now being, Blackpool about 99,000, and Poulton about 3,000.

Of course, the importance or welfare of a city is not reckoned by the number of heads, for, as Walt Whitman says, the place where the great city stands is not the place with the most streets and houses and people, but the place with the healthiest and happiest men, women, and children. In that respect, no doubt Poulton is as well off as Blackpool. But, all the same, the contrasted figures are significant of immense

municipal development and business progress (though that business be catering for holiday-makers) on the part of Blackpool.

HUMOURS OF TAXATION.

During the first twenty years of the nineteenth century there was not much increase of population, nor any great development, in any part of the country. Because of the wars (chiefly with France), almost everything was taxed, wages were low, food dear, and when times are thus lean and hard, the birth-rate seems to be affected. The wise and witty Sidney Smith, a Church of England minister and contributor to the " Edinburgh Review " (which started in 1803), says in one of his articles, " The inevitable consequences of being too fond of (military) glory are —taxes upon every article which enters the mouth, or covers the back, . . taxes on everything on earth and in the waters under the earth, on everything that comes from abroad or is grown at home,—taxes on the ermine which decorates the judge and the rope which hangs the criminal,—taxes on the brass nails of the coffin and on the ribbons of the bride. At bed or board, couchant or levant, we must pay,—the schoolboy whips his taxed top, the beardless youth manages his taxed horse with a taxed bridle, on a taxed road, and the dying Englishman, pouring his medicine, which has paid 7 per cent., into a spoon that has paid 15 per cent., flings himself back upon his chintz bed, which has paid 22 per cent., and expires in the arms of an apothecary who has paid a hundred pounds for the privilege of putting him to death. . . Then his property is taxed, his virtues are handed down to posterity on taxed marble, and he is gathered to his fathers,—to be taxed no more."

After that picture of his day, one is not surprised to find Sydney Smith declaring that " there is more misery inflicted upon mankind by one year of war than by all the civil peculations and oppressions of a century. Yet men rush into it with avidity, hailing

official murderers (he classed Napoleon as one) in scarlet, gold, and cocks' feathers, as the greatest and most glorious of human creatures."

THE MOP AND THE ATLANTIC.

In those times, as in ours, and as in all times, past, present, and future, there are always some men opposed to all progressive change, and Sydney Smith thus speaks of those of his day, in a passage which tells us some of the innovations he saw:—"Turnpike roads, navigable canals, inoculation, hops, tobacco, the Reformation, the Revolution,—there are always a set of worthy and moderately-gifted men who bawl out death and ruin upon every valuable change which the varying aspect of human affairs absolutely and imperiously requires."

There are even such men in such a progressive place as Blackpool to-day.

Sydney Smith is the originator of the classic phrase about "Mrs. Partington and her mop." We would like to think that it was the sight of the sea at Blackpool which suggested the humorous parable, but I hardly think the Rev. Sydney ever got to the Fylde coast. But his description will fit the Blackpool of that time as well as the Sidmouth which he makes the locality. "In the winter of 1824 there was a great storm and flood. The tide rose to an incredible height. The waves rushed in upon the houses and everything was threatened with destruction. In the midst of this sublime and terrible storm Dame Partington, who lived upon the beach, was seen at the door of her house with mop and pattens, trundling her mop, squeezing out the sea-water, and vigorously pushing away the Atlantic Ocean. The Atlantic was roused, Mrs. Partington's spirit was up, but I need not tell you that the contest was unequal. The Atlantic Ocean beat Mrs. Partington."

That was written when the House of Lords was attacking the Reform Bill of 1832—and the opposition was compared to the picturesque Mrs. Partington with her mop against the Atlantic tide.

But in spite of stupid and interested opposition, progress was going on. In 1827, the first telegraph wire was run between Liverpool and Holyhead, and in 1831-3 were passed the Factory Acts ameliorating child labour in factories and insisting on some elementary education for the little workers.

LORD NELSON AND THE "FOUDROYANT."

In those hard times, when Walter Scott was writing his famous "Waverley" novels and a clergyman named Malthus wrote a book called "The Law of Population"—(1803)—arguing that there were too many people in the world (a fallacy, for the great poverty was due to war, not to over-population), and advocating restriction of families, Nelson was defeating the French everywhere and making England "mistress of the seas." Looking back a hundred years one sees how foolish all the fighting was. In 1803, Lord Nelson told the men of his navy they must "hate a Frenchman as they did the devil." Just recently we were told by many people to hate the Germans as we once hated the French. In another hundred years—unless the world gets righteousness and sense, we may be at loggerheads with the French again, and friends with the Germans. That's a childish game. It is best and noblest to be kind and just with all our neighbour nations, and not call them all the bad names we can when we are quarrelling with them and hail them as angels when they agree with us.

Nelson's flagship was called the "Foudroyant" (which means "thunder-flame"), and he never dreamed that a hundred years after he trod its deck that vessel would be wrecked at Blackpool. It is a question if Lord Nelson ever knew there was such a place. We of to-day know and see a great many more things than ever Lord Nelson knew and saw. Though it is only just over a hundred years since he died (he was killed at the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805), Lord Nelson never saw a steamer, nor a gaslight, nor a tram-

car, nor a railway train, nor a telegraph wire, still less a "wireless" apparatus, nor a sewing machine, nor a telephone, nor a motor-car, nor a typewriter, and he never went to a cinema. He never heard of Charlie Chaplin. He never even rode a bicyle. What would he have thought of a submarine, or an aeroplane? None of these things was known, because not yet invented, in Lord Nelson's days, though the steamboat came soon after, in 1807 (the invention of Robert Fulton, an American), the same year in which gaslights were first used in London, and then, while Byron and John Keats were writing their poetry, the superstitious nations were scared by the great comet of 1811-12, the year the Jacquard loom was invented by a Frenchman—thinking the sky-ghost portended the end of the world—and it is curious that it coincided with Napoleon's terribly disastrous retreat from Moscow and the beginning of his downfall and final defeat by Wellington at Waterloo (1815).

But while the people were suffering and groaning under war, invention was going on, manufactures increasing, and Parry and Franklin exploring the North Polar Seas. There was severe poverty in the rural districts as well as in the towns. Between 1760 and 1843, seven million acres of common land were enclosed—mainly to the advantage of the landlords, though in some cases the enclosing resulted in better cultivation of the soil—Layton Hawes, Thornton Marsh (this by Bold Hesketh-Fleetwood and Thomas Weld in 1799) and other common lands about Blackpool were thus enclosed—farm rents were very high, and labourers' wages very low, the latter being assessed by justices of the peace, who were usually landowners or their relatives and friends.

Because of the increase of cotton and woollen factories, there now grew up a capitalistic class, as well as a landowning class, though the two soon intermingled, and the aristocracy did not now scruple to go into trade, or develop the mineral resources of their estates. In the seventeenth century it was considered degrading for the nobility to engage in trade,

and the author of Robinson Crusoe was thought to have said a shocking revolutionary thing when he averred that a man might engage in commerce and yet be a gentleman, while Dr. Johnson announced that " an English merchant is a new species of gentleman."

The discontent of the poor workers led to the forming of Reform Clubs—forerunners of trade-unionism, which, because of the repressive laws against such organisations, had to meet secretly. William Cobbett ran a paper agitating for labour and social reform, and Samuel Bamford, of Middleton, tells us in his autobiography much about these movements, and the attack and slaughter, at St. Peter's Fields (Peterloo), Manchester, of an inoffensive demonstration, by soldiers (1819), two years before the first iron steamship was made (1821).

But little growing Blackpool, by its pleasant sea, was happily untouched by these agitations, though out of them arose the working-class conditions which later on were to give the wage and allow the leisure for Blackpool to become the holiday playground of Lancashire and Yorkshire and the Midlands, the time when visitors should not come to the place in hundreds, as in 1800, but in tens and tens of thousands.

Meanwhile, even thus early, neighbouring spots were endeavouring to become rivals to Blackpool, or at least to do business under the wings of its season. Lytham was already a popular resort, with more visitors than Blackpool. Fleetwood was as yet non-existent—its site was a stretch of sand dunes called " The Warren." But Cleveleys and Bispham began to advertise so far back as 1783, as the following notice in the " Manchester Mercury " of that year (April 8th) shows: " Anthony Salthouse, at Cleavles, two miles from Poulton and two miles from Blackpool, begs leave to inform his friends and the public in general that he has very good accommodation for Company during the bathing season at his abovesaid place." He kept this advertisement up for several years. In 1792 there is a mansion advertised to let at " Bispham, near the seashore, . . with

barn stable, and coach-house, and any quantity of meadow or pasture ground."

Soon after the first gipsies came to Blackpool—the Boswells, who camped on the cliffs near the Gynn, in 1810—what would they think to-day to see their descendants going to school with "Gorgios"?—and Mr. Henry Banks, one of Blackpool's pioneers, was endeavouring to develop the village by erecting cottages for apartments and summer residences, being selfishly opposed by the hotel-keepers, who, being owners of most of the land, as Thornber says, "would neither build themselves nor permit others to do so" for the benefit of the whole community—yet, on the other hand, was not Banks also looking to his own interest?—there was talk of starting an elementary school, but it was not till 1817 that one was built, a National School in Church Street, and then an infant school in Bank Hey Street, the site at present occupied by Hill's Bazaar. Appropriately, the old infant school building thus did not altogether lose its character as a place for children, for where once boys and girls learned "A.B.C." now they get toys of all kinds—a very happy transformation, those youngsters who are not over-fond of lessons would say.

To a gentleman named John Gisborne, Blackpool's first school is due, and, as the man who starts a school is doing more for civilisation and progress than perhaps all other agencies put together, John Gisborne's memory deserves to be kept in high honour. He gave money himself, he collected from friends and visitors, to achieve his excellent object. He was something of a scholar and literary man himself. He wrote poetry, of which Thornber's "History" gives samples:

> "O Blackpool!
> Sure the pulse of memory must cease to beat
> Ere I forget thee, ere affection fails
> For thee, thou worn and billow-beaten cliff,
> Barrier of ocean, Foreland of the Fylde,
> Region of glorious sunsets!"

How many millions since that was written have had that pleasant thought, though in less poetic phrase?

Blackpool's first National School was free to children of all denominations. Thornber regrets, so long ago as 1817, that the "season" prevented many children going to school during the summer months, when they had to help their parents to look after the visitors, bathers and riders.

To John Gisborne also belongs the credit of securing to Blackpool its first church, the Parish Church. He was indefatigably assisted in this work by the Rev. T. S. Grimshaw. The following donations to the building fund were given:—Mr. Robert Banks £100, Mrs. Nickson £100, A Friend £100, Mr. H. Banks £100, Mr. John Forshaw £100, Mr. John Hornby £100, Mr. Robert Hesketh £50, Mr. Fielding £50, Mr. Jonathan Peel £50 10s., Mr. Bonny £50. The building, described "as a perpetual curacy under Bispham and dedicated to St. John," cost £1,072 0s. 5d., and was consecrated on July 6, 1821, by the Bishop of Chester.

Of course, that old church is gone now, and a magnificent modern edifice occupies its place. The old first church was built of bricks from a croft on the cliffs. Its successor (picture facing this page) was built in 1877. It was again rebuilt—the present church—in 1894, of stone from Longridge Fells.

In 1826, the first Nonconformist, or Independent Chapel—the old Bethesda Chapel—was erected, in what was then a field (now Kent Road). Prior to this the Nonconformists had services at Fisher's Farm, Marton, licensed for divine service in 1763, and before that they walked to Elswick Chapel, ten miles distant. In 1835 the Wesleyan Chapel in Bank Hey Street (bottom of Adelaide Street), was pulled down and rebuilt larger in 1861.

Thus Blackpool began to make progress religiously and educationally.

BLACKPOOL'S FIRST HISTORIAN.

Thornber—the Rev. William Thornber—became Vicar of Blackpool in 1829. He was a typical Fylde native, with Norse blood in his pedigree, as his sur-

Blackpool Old Parish Church (St. John's) in the eighteen-seventies.

WOOLWICH
PUBLIC
LIBRARIES.

name indicates, born at Poulton in 1803 (December 5th). He was a tall big man, of about six feet, with great physical strength, and no mean pugilist (he sometimes thrashed refractory men), with rugged features, denoting a rather strong temper and some eccentricity. His writings show that he was fond of literature, particularly of the poets, and he had the scribbling faculty of the born journalist. He contributed regularly to the " Preston Pilot " (I have hunted up his articles and stories in the bound volumes of that publication in the Harris Institute Library, Preston). He was a man of progressive ideas, he denounced the debauchery of the period, and the disgusting and pitiable spectacle of public executions. He wrote verse himself, also a romance called " Pennystone " (I have a copy of it in book form; it is out of print and very scarce). But, though the tale is interesting as embodying much of Fylde tradition and folk-lore, Thornber's forte was not novel-writing nor character-drawing. He is best at history, for he was a keen observer and diligent gatherer of the records of the past. His domestic life was not happy; he " erred and strayed " (as the Prayer Book says), and because of intemperance and breaking his marriage vows, he had to resign as clergyman (1846). His conduct must have been due to some mental derangement, as all moral declension is, for eventually he lost his reason and died in a private asylum (at the age of 82). It is not for us to judge him but to pity. He loved Blackpool; he loved the Fylde countryside and he lovingly told its story in his time, and told it well. His body lies in the churchyard of St. John's, where he was once the vicar. His soul, we trust, is " marching on."

" THOSE IN PERIL ON THE SEA."

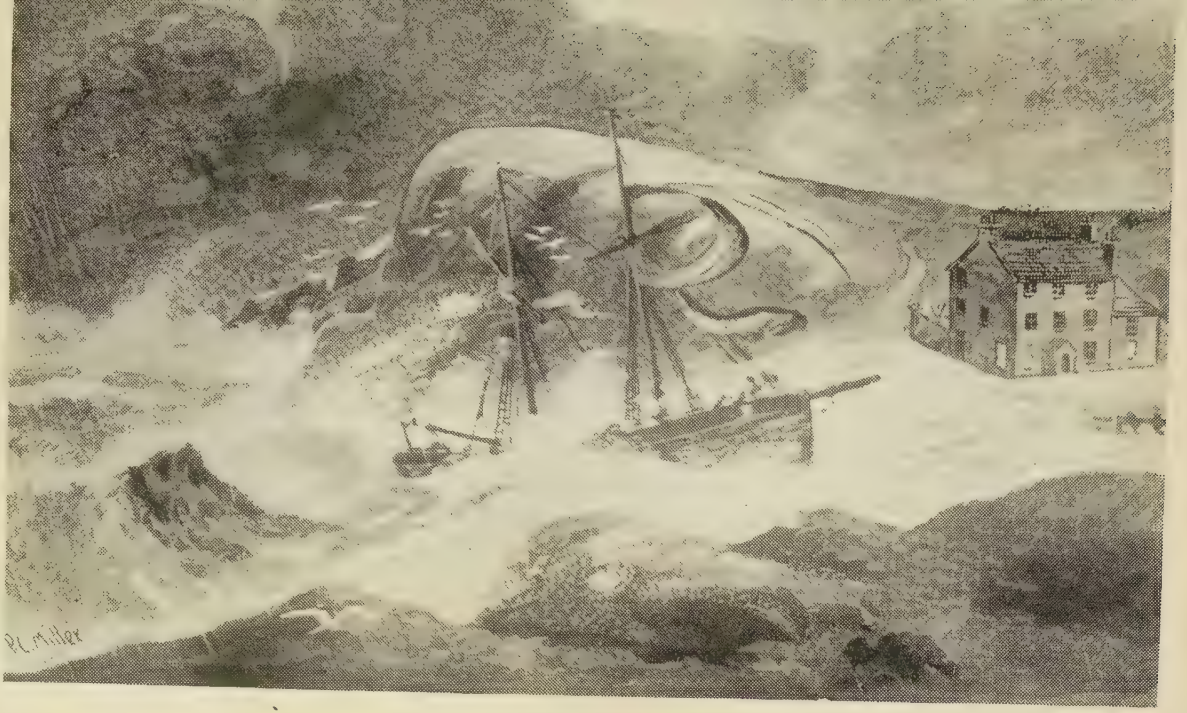
The Blackpool Parish Churchyard, with its graves of the bodies of drowned sailors, strangers, names unknown, who came to their death on our coast, tells something of the wintry tragic aspects of that sea which in summer is the joy of visitors. The sands where the little children pass golden hours have been

the place of black doom for many a poor mariner who went home to his bairns no more.

A hundred years ago our Fylde coast was a terrible place for wrecks. The Horsebank, off Lytham, is a veritable cemetery of ships.

Many of the old farm gateposts about Blackpool were made from wrecks. There are samples on Warbreck Hill Road. The old inhabitants can tell you the names of the vessels from whose masts or timbers the old gateposts were fashioned.

Thornber tells of the bodies of nine men found at one time on the shore in 1787—their ship had gone down in the night. In 1801, on a stormy, freezing night, a packet was wrecked, and only three out of eighteen got ashore. In 1815, a brig drifted on the beach, the only living thing aboard being a cat. There was a vessel freighted with porter wrecked off Norbreck, and many years afterwards bottles were found when the sandbank where she went down was washed away. In 1824, a sloop named "Fanny," laden with black, blue, and red cloth, drifted ashore, the crew being rescued, and, as Thornber remarks, "Fanny coats were proverbial for many a year" in Blackpool. In 1833 (June 11th—one of those sudden summer storms that occasionally strike our coast), there were eleven wrecks. A Scottish schooner escaped destruction by steering for a light in the window of the Gynn Inn. The vessel rode safely up the gully, and her bowsprit almost touched the door of the old hostelry. The saved crew attended the Parish Church on the Sunday after their deliverance, and Thornber preached from the following text (which owing to a printer's error is given erroneously as Chapter 4 instead of 14 in his "History"). "But when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried, Lord, save me," etc. (Matthew xiv., 30-31). Thornber presented to the mate, as a "token of remembrance, whereby Blackpool and his signal preservation there should ever be in his mind," a Bible in which the minister wrote the following verse:—



Wreck at the Gynn.

During a fierce gale in 1833, a Scottish schooner was guided to safety by a candle in the window of Gynn Inn.

PUBLIC

" May this thy star, thy compass be,
To steer thy course through life's dark sea,
And bring thee safe to that far shore
Where billows break and dash no more."

Thornber endeavoured to get a lifeboat for Blackpool. The lifeboat had already been invented by Wouldhave, of South Shields (1789), and the National Lifeboat Institution was inaugurated in 1824 by Sir William Hillary, of the Isle of Man, who had made a public appeal asking how long Englishmen were going to let loss of life by shipwrecks go on without doing something to save the crews. The first of the Institution's lifeboats was sent to Douglas (1824).

Blackpool did not get a lifeboat till many years afterwards, though Thornber did his utmost to secure one in his day. He tried to raise the money by public subscription, but there was not sufficient response, though he eloquently asked, " Could the friends of humanity open their purse in a better cause?"

In 1837, Queen Victoria succeeded to the throne of Great Britain and Ireland. The amazing era of science and invention and discovery, the age of marvels and manufacture, and, better still, the period of education and development of humanitarianism, had already begun. Lord Ashley (afterwards Lord Shaftesbury, connected with Blackpool and the Fylde by his descendant, Colonel W. W. Ashley, M.P.) and Oastler of Bradford, and Fielden of Oldham, and others, were agitating and working hard for the amelioration of the cruel conditions of the poor little factory slaves of Lancashire and Yorkshire. Elizabeth Fry was labouring for prison reform and the abolition of imprisonment for debt (read Dickens' account of its effects in " Little Dorritt "), also of capital punishment for theft—certainly very necessary when we read that in 1816 a child of ten year was sentenced to death for stealing some articles less than 5s. in value—(yet the majority of the House of Lords were against this Christian mercy). The British and Foreign Bible Society was founded in 1804. Robert Owen was making co-operative and social experiments (there was a co-operative corn-mill at Hull so far back as 1795).

Largely due to the efforts of Francis Place and others, the 4d. tax was taken off newspapers (they got it reduced to 1d. in 1836, and it was completely abolished in 1855). The Duke of Wellington, who was Prime Minister of England for a time, obstinately opposed all these democratic reforms and others, and was for crushing them by military force, but public opinion was too strong even for the man who won Waterloo.

The repeal, in 1824, of the Combination Laws which forbade workmen to band together to better their conditions of employment or to raise wages, in which work Francis Place played a great part (he was an employer who had once been a workman) started the Trade Union movement which favourably influenced the development of Blackpool, as hitherto the artisans had had neither money nor leisure for holidays at the seaside. The invention of the railway train (1830)—the first line being between Liverpool and Manchester—gave the people wonderfully increased facilities for travelling, though it was not till many years afterwards (1846) that a railway ran to Poulton and Blackpool (Talbot Road). It is noteworthy that most of these developments and inventions—education for children, reduction of hours of labour and more holidays for the people, removal of taxes on knowledge (newspapers), were opposed by many people, and by members of the House of Lords, whose speeches and arguments read very selfish and silly in the light of to-day. For instance, it was contended that locomotives would smother the country with smoke and kill the crops, while one M.P. averred that education and books would make the labouring classes worse workmen. Perhaps he was afraid that if the workers got educated they might object to Prime Ministers giving their boys of twelve years old Government sinecures at £60 a week (as the gentleman who was Prime Minister in 1800 did). But those were days of wholesale corruption. Voters were openly bought and sold. There is an old house on the Blackpool-Poulton highway, a few hundred yards past Hoo Hill, at the corner of a little off-lane on the

right, that for generations was nicknamed " Bribery Hall," because tradition says its owner got it for voting for a certain condidate in a general election long ago.

At this time Marton had a schoolmaster, " Parson Bryer," a fine scholar, but foolish with the " drink," who educated the sons of many well-known families. He was succeeded by Mr. Robert Mather, afterwards surveyor to the Blackpool Local Board.

LONG LIVES.

Before the invention of the railway train, travelling, as we have seen in previous chapters, was done by horse-back and coach, and great deal of it by that oldest form of locomotion in the world, humorously known as " shank's pony," perhaps, when all is said and done, the healthiest and most delightful mode of getting about the world there is. It is an old saying that the biggest stranger at Blackpool is death. Thornber, in his " History," telling of the longevity of persons living on our healthy coast—and the great ages, 80, 90, and upwards, on the tombstones in our Fylde churchyards corroborate his statement—speaks of Ellen Bailey, about the year 1786, walking to London and back (460 miles) twice, once when she was over 60 years old (she would have made a fine member of the Ramble Club, wouldn't she?), while Mr. W. Bonny, who died at the age of 91, thought nothing of walking to Preston and back in one day (40 miles) when he was over 80, and many more instances of aged ability could be given. Mr. L. Crookall, in 1822, walked from Blackpool to Preston Guild—this being his fourth visit to that event, which only occurs every twenty years (the latest being September, 1922).

Thornber also chronicles the prowess of Betty Hodgson, a farmer's wife of Little Layton, who at the age of 84 could carry a load of meal (240 lbs.) from a cart at her door and along a passage to the kitchen.

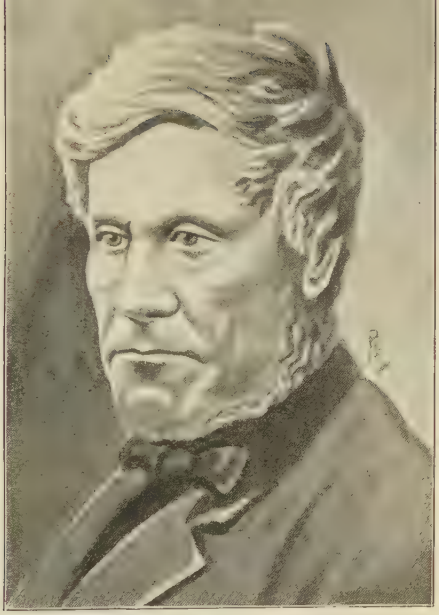
In 1816, coaches began to run regularly between Preston and Blackpool.

But in addition to travelling by foot and horse ere the coming of the railway, there was transit by water. Packet-boats sailed the canals, and carried many passengers. But there was no canal to Blackpool, the nearest being the Preston and Lancaster Canal, which zig-zags through some of the most beautiful parts of the Fylde, and affords an enjoyable outing even in our time, as the Lifeboat Chemist of Abingdon Street can testify. This canal gets no nearer Blackpool than Salwick (13 miles) and Woodplumpton and Garstang.

A handbill, printed (at Kendal) in 1820, gives particulars of the packet-boats, drawn by horses, running between Kendal, Lancaster, Garstang, and Preston. The fore-cabin fare from Preston to Kendal was 6s., after-cabin 4s.; and pro rata for shorter distances on the route,—fore-cabin 1½d. a mile, and after-cabin 1d. a mile. The journey from Lancaster to Preston (20 miles) took 8 hours. "Some" travelling, as our American cousins would say. One wonders was there any "speed limit" on the canals. Those were the leisurely days—yet one questions if the world is really any happier to-day with all its modern hustle and haste. The announcement also states that "tea, coffee, and refreshments are provided," but gives no prices.

THE VICTORIA PROMENADE.

Thus, while the easy-going eighteenth century had evolved into the bustling nineteenth century, while inventions were increasing, changes and reforms of all kinds going on, agitations for improvement of labouring and working-class conditions, while philosopher Thomas Carlyle was writing his volcanic essays and young Charles Dickens winning fame with his "Pickwick Papers," which give a vivid and humorous account of those days; while amid these tumults and changes on earth, Herschel and other astronomers were exploring the serenity of the skies, discovering planets, and studying the glorious riddle of the stars; Queen Victoria came to the throne, and Blackpool



(Drawn from an old photograph.)

Rev. Wm. Thornber, Blackpool's First Historian.

(See Page 165.)

(See Page 165.) *(Photo lent by Mr. H. Pearson.)*

The Old " Crystal Palace "

had now got its first Wesleyan Chapel in Bank Hey Street (corner of Adelaide Street) in 1835, and Public Baths near the Lane Ends Hotel, as well as developments at South Shore, whose first house was built by Thomas Moore in 1819, and whose Parish Church of Holy Trinity was built in 1836, celebrated the occasion of the Queen's accession with loyal rejoicings and the opening of a new Promenade and Assembly Rooms (years afterwards The Crystal Palace), which, of course, were named in honour of the new young Queen, Victoria Promenade and Victoria Terrace (now Victoria Street). There was a festival dinner in the Victoria Promenade Room, the Sunday School children, after a procession, were treated to coffee and buns and a distribution of coppers, and packets of tea were given to the old women of the district. Thornber, then Vicar of Blackpool, presided at the evening social and concert. That was in 1837, when the population of Blackpool was 710, and the number of visitors in the town on August 17th was 1,856—the year Thornber published his " History of Blackpool " (printed at Poulton, by Smith, the Market Place).

In the " Preston Pilot " of August 19th, 1837, is a note about a forthcoming ball in the following flowery language (evidently written by Thornber, who was a contributor to this paper): " The Muse Terpsichore has issued her imperative behest that all her votaries residing in or near Blackpool shall duly and truly present their lively offerings at her shrine at Mr. Cocker's Victoria Promenade Room," etc.

Blackpool, so renowned for its great ballrooms to-day, began its Terpsichorean appeals in its early youth.

Bazaars also are no new thing. The same old paper (which you may see in Preston Public Library) reports a bazaar, in aid of the new South Shore Church, which raised a sum of £281 (in 1838).

During the "season," at this time the little Liverpool steamer to Barrow now called at Blackpool for passengers, who, as there was no pier, nor landing jetty, had to be conveyed to the steamer in boats.

I have spoken of the " season." How many visitors do you think Blackpool had during the " season " at this time? The " Preston Pilot " of Aug. 22nd, 1840, reports that Blackpool is " crowded to excess " with visitors to the number of 3,000. That's hardly as many as two or three trains bring in during August to-day (1923), and there are about 200 special trains every week-end, as well as the ordinary service (and this does not include the tens of thousands who come by motor-coach). Blackpool's population in 1840-41 was 2,168.

Fleetwood had now come into being. Sir Peter Hesketh Fleetwood, the lord of the Manor, had the great idea of converting the sand warren into a port, and he spent his fortune in achieving that object. Plans for the town were made, and the streets were marked out by a plough. The first building was a beer-house, erected in 1836-7 (later it became an outfitter's shop).

XVIII.

THE "CRUSADER" WRECK, AND OTHERS.

As well as "The beauty and mystery of the ships, and the magic of the sea," as Longfellow sings, there is the awful havoc of the ocean in storm. Wrecks on our coast have been mentioned before, and particulars given of a few. To describe them all would take a book, and you may find the tale of the wrecks in "The Story of the Blackpool Lifeboat" (a copy of which is in the Public Library). But a few words may be said, in their proper sequence, of one or two of the more memorable storms and wrecks.

In the first week of January, 1839, there was a great gale, making much havoc inland as well as on the coast. An old windmill on the top of Preesall Hill was wrecked by this storm; and the Blackpool correspondent (Thornber) of the "Preston Pilot" describes the devastation in Blackpool (whose population was now about 1,000)—roofs blown off Dickson's Hotel, and Nickson's, off the Yorkshire House, and others, windows blown in, and glass, slate and timber strewn in all directions. Sea-birds—teal, duck, etc.—were blown ashore so exhausted that they were captured by hand. The storm began with mizzling rain, then the wind veered to N.W., and when night fell there were two wrecks on our beach. Four vessels from Liverpool sank out at sea.

At Cleveleys, a big barque, firing a distress gun, came ashore, three of the crew having been swept overboard, and her cargo of chests of tea (to which the natives helped themselves) was scattered along the shore. At Lytham, fifteen vessels lay badly damaged, while other ships, including "The Favourite," of London, had gone down with all hands —the beach was littered with her cargo of tobacco. On Marton Moss (Blowing Sands) several old clay-

built cottages were wrecked, the tenants having narrow escapes.

In the daybreak (January 8th) a large vessel was seen stranded off South Shore, opposite the coastguard's house (afterwards the Starr Inn). She was the "Crusader," 584 tons burthen, bound from Liverpool to Bombay, with a cargo of silk, cotton goods, etc., worth £60,000, and carrying Government despatches. She had a crew of 26. The captain emptied casks of oil to smooth the rough sea, and he and the crew then succeeded in getting ashore in two of the vessel's small boats, and were well looked after at the Britannia Inn (now demolished), South Shore. Much of the "Crusader's" cargo was carried off by the coast inhabitants, and by people from Marton and surrounding districts as it came ashore. The authorities—police from Preston—searched the locality, and in Marton found the valuable silks and other goods hidden in pigstyes, down wells, and buried in orchards. Five men were arrested for theft, and, refusing to pay the fines, were sent to jail (House of Correction, Preston). Divers from Liverpool got up a deal of the sunken "Crusader's" cargo, but not it all, for, singularly, 28 years after the wreck (1867), owing to the Ribble Channel (along the Lytham and St. Annes shore) changing its course and breaking up the old sandbanks, what was left of the "Crusader's" cargo was washed out of the embedded hulk, and drifted ashore at Blackpool.

On Sunday morning, Oct. 18th, 1843, the brig "Aristocrat" came ashore opposite the site of the Imperial Hydro. Two passengers (John Sparke and Eliza Leach) attempted to get to land in one of the ship's small boats and were drowned. Their graves are in Blackpool Parish Churchyard.

In August, 1848, the "Ocean Monarch," an emigrant ship from Liverpool, got on fire. Many passengers leapt overboard and were drowned. Dead bodies were washed up all along the Fylde coast, Blackpool, Lytham, Norbreck. The tombstones in Bispham Churchyard tell of some of them. On Aug. 8th, 1852, a waterspout, like a huge long bag, as high

as a windmill, was seen off Blackpool. It glided along the sea, followed by a smaller waterspout, towards Rossall Point (six miles), where it disappeared to flashes of lightning and crashes of thunder and an extraordinary deluge of rain.

There was also a waterspout seen off Blackpool in 1829 (according to the "Preston Pilot"), but there is no record of any other, as far as I can learn, since 1852. At Christmas of the same year a great storm not only made havoc on the coast, but blew houses and buildings down at Manchester, Wigan, Oldham, Bolton, Stockport, etc. The papers of that date give pages of the tale of destruction. The Ribble overflowed for miles. Blackpool was flooded by the tide, the waves dashing into the bedroom windows of the Wellington Hotel and the Foxhall. A new house was blown down at South Shore. Two schooners were blown ashore at Lytham, and there were wrecks off Fleetwood.

On Nov. 24th, 1856, the "British Token," a schooner, laden with sacks of oatmeal, was wrecked at South Shore. One of the crew, a youth of 18, was washed overboard and drowned. Three sailors lashed themselves to the mast, and were rescued by Bob Bickerstaffe (afterwards lifeboat coxswain) with a horse and cart. The captain told Bob that he said to his crew when the vessel struck: "You must prepare for heaven or hell, for we are on those infernal Ribble banks."

In 1861, the schooner "William Henry," with a cargo of flour and lard, was wrecked at South Shore, the crew being saved. The South Shore folks had a fine scoop of tubs of lard on this occasion, despite the threatening notices put out by the Custom's House officers.

Blackpool got its lifeboat on July 14th, 1864, Bob Bickerstaffe being coxswain. In September of that year it went out to the "St. Michael," wrecked on the Horse Bank, and saved the crew. In 1865, one wild November evening, a vessel was seen in distress off Blackpool. The lifeboat set out, but the vessel sank ere she reached her, and all hands were lost. This wreck proved to be the barque "Favorite," with a

cargo of palm oil and nuts. The shore up to Cleveleys was littered with barrels of oil and strewn with nuts. Such of the bodies as were found were buried in Blackpool Parish Churchyard. Other wrecks and lifeboat rescues are given in a list in Chapter XX.

There are traditions and tales of vessels lured to wreck by false lights on the sand-dunes, and of families whose sudden rise to fortune is accounted for by the spoil they secured by this foul means, also of houses haunted—there is one in Lytham Road, now used by Arnold House School—by the sailors thus lured to doom—and, though doubtless, on our Fylde coast, as all round the British shores, there are instances of wreckers and their dreadful work, we must allow for romantic imagination and exaggeration in connection with these stories.

FIRST FYLDE NEWSPAPER.

During the "Forties"—1840-50—"the hungry forties," as they have been called, when distress and destitution were prevalent all over the land, when the Chartists were agitating for reform, when Joseph Livsey started the "Teetotal Movement" at Preston, the southern gateway to our Windmill Land, in 1832. to combat the drunkenness of the period; when starving labour was rioting, and some Rochdale workingmen set about helping themselves by starting the modern co-operative movement (1844), when the Rev. Charles Kingsley, Maurice, and other noble souls of the "Christian Socialist" movement were battling for the suffering people (read Kingsley's "Alton Locke" and "Yeast," for descriptions of the period), Blackpool only progressed slowly. Yet it advanced.

In 1840, the opening of the Preston and Wyre railway through Poulton to Fleetwood made the Fylde more easily accessible, and Fleetwood lighthouse was built. The same year the first steam dredger was launched at Fleetwood and the telegraph introduced to that port. Then, in 1843 (Saturday, November 18), the "Fleetwood Chronicle," the first paper in the Fylde (and parent of the "Blackpool Herald,"

which amalagamated with the "Gazette" in 1920), was started and printed at Fleetwood by William Porter, whose son, years afterwards, wrote a " History of the Fylde." It was a very small four-page paper. Even at this date, 1842-1843, we find aviation discussed in the papers, and an account of the invention of a flying machine by an American, and talk of " aerial steam navigation." In 1844, Blackpool's first covered market, called St. John's, afterwards used as Public Library, now Municipal Offices and Boots' shop and the rest of the block in Market Street, with this motto over its entrance, " Buy the truth and sell it not," was opened. Then came the first railway line into Blackpool, putting it into direct communication with the Lancashire towns—the line from Poulton to Talbot Road (1846), the first meeting of the Agricultural Society (1847), the same year that Queen Victoria, on her way to London from Scotland, visited Fleetwood (an interesting old print of the event shows the tall chimneyed railway trains, the crowd, with the women in bonnets and wide skirts, and the gentlemen in stove-pipe hats). In 1850, two years after the repeal of the Corn Laws and the cheapening of daily bread, and after Acts of Parliament shortening the labour day and increase of wages by trade union effort, gas was introduced into the Fylde (at Lytham), and in 1853 Blackpool got an Improvement Act and its first gas-lamps, though some of the shops were lit by gas in 1852. Blackpool's old hulking and promenade were constructed, and a bridge, called " The Bridge of Peace," built over the cleft in the cliffs near the Lane Ends Hotel.

In 1862 the Blackpool and Lytham Railway was opened, and Blackpool got what we wish no town ever needed, its first big Police Station and Court (in Abingdon Street), though, as you will read later, it would be well, so long as we find police necessary, if all other boroughs ran their police force on the same helpful humane lines as Blackpool.

In 1863, the railway line was extended from Lytham to Blackpool, and the Central Station was erected at Hounds Hill (near the Promenade).

Also in 1863 Blackpool's first pier, the North Pier, which cost £11,540, united Miss Blackpool with Father Neptune. The jetty, costing £6,000, was not added till 1867, when the South Pier, now called Central Pier, was opened. In 1864, Blackpool's fresh-water needs were supplied by the Fylde Water Board, and our first lifeboat came for salt-water service, nearly thirty years after Thornber first agitated for it. There had been a great hurricane and wrecks in 1853. Thornber, in his account of the gale in the " Preston Pilot," describes how on the Sunday after Christmas Day (Saturday), the huge tide flooded Blackpool. The promenade from Manchester House (Hotel) to South Shore Vicarage was carried away. At Foxhall Hotel the rooms were knee-deep in water. Some young pigs in the yard were saved by being taken upstairs. The waves burst open the blockaded doors of Wylie's vaults at South Shore, which Thornber calls " this pretty daughter of Blackpool, worthy so renowned a mother," a new house, just completed, was blown down, and there were vessels wrecked on Pilling Sands. The swollen river came sixty yards up Fishergate at Preston. This storm, and others following, made urgent the question of a lifeboat for the Blackpool coast. Lytham had had a lifeboat since 1851, and Fleetwood since 1859. Fleetwood had its great lighthouse, the Pharos, before the lifeboat. It was erected in 1840, at a cost of £1,480. The illuminant is gas, intensified by powerful reflectors, and is visible for 18 miles. There was a lighthouse erected at Lytham in 1847, but a January storm in 1863 wrecked the structure. It was rebuilt on the dunes between Lytham and St. Annes, but was pulled down some years ago.

BLACKPOOL'S FIRST LIFEBOAT.

To good women, sympathetic women, is due the chief merit for Blackpool's first lifeboat. In 1862, some lady visitors gave Mr. John Pickop £30 as the nucleus of a Lifeboat Fund, while another lady, Mrs. Hopkins, and her daughter gave £250, Sir Benjamin

Blackpool's First Lifeboat (the "Robert William," launched on July 14th, 1864), and its Crew, with Members of the Lifeboat Committee.

Members of the Blackpool first Lifeboat Crew:—Coxswain Robert Bickerstaffe (at the helm), John Swarbrick, Tom Fish, Tom Maudsley, S. Jolly, W. Jolly, Sam Rimmer, Jack Parkinson, Jim Parr, Richard Gaskell, James Swarbrick, James Stanhope, and Wm. Parr.

Amongst the members of the Committee are the Rev. C. H. Wainwright (centre), in black gown and clerical tie, the first Vicar of Christ Church; next to him Dr. Pickup, local Lifeboat treasurer, and Capt. Young, R.N. (leaning on his stick), father-in-law of Mr. A. M. Viener, chairman of the branch; Mr. W. Livesey (son of the founder of the Teetotal movement), Mr. A. M. Viener, chairman of the Committee; Mr. Viener, senr., uncle of the chairman; and the Rev. R. R. Redman, secretary. The fireman in helmet is Ted Banks, cousin to Dr. Cocker. The gentleman in light vest and trousers, at the right, is Capt. Ward, Inspector of Lifeboats. The others we have not been able to identify.

Heywood £100, and Mrs. Eccles give the site for the Lifeboat House (on Lytham Road). The Rev. C. H. Wainwright (Christ Church) called a meeting and the great work began. A lifeboat was ordered, and Bob Bickerstaffe, then a fisherman, blue-eyed and breezy like the sea he loved, later manager of the Central Pier, was appointed coxswain. The lifeboat, called the "Robert William," in memory of the husband of Mrs. Hopkins, was launched amid public festivities on July 14th, 1864, and its first turn-out was in September (18th) of the same year, to the assistance of the brig "St. Michael" (a crew of 14). The lifeboat records show that John Bickerstaffe, since then Alderman and Mayor, and Chairman of the Blackpool Tower Company, was a member of the lifeboat crew on this occasion.

As it's an ill wind that blows nobody good, some wrecks have been a sort of providential thing to Blackpool. The "Pea" wreck has been mentioned. In 1856 a wreck at South Shore cast many bags of oatmeal on the sands. Then in 1816 the same locality was obliged with a wreck which stored many houses with lard and flour for weeks. Later a supply of bacon came to South Shore's inhabitants in similar manner, despite the threats of the Custom House officers to prosecute all persons caught detaining wreckage.

Meanwhile, more places of worship were being erected—Adelaide Street Wesleyan in 1864, and Christ Church in 1866.

DICKENS' TESTIMONY.

On April 21st, 1869, Blackpool had a very celebrated visitor, Charles Dickens, who came here for his health, and wrote in a letter, "I have had a delicious walk by the sea, I sleep soundly, and have picked up amazingly in appetite." He stayed at the Beach Hotel (now the Tower Cafe).

As in all places where human beings live, even holiday towns, there must be provision for the dead as well as the living. Blackpool opened its Cemetery,

New Road, in 1873. A year later the Old Aquarium (now absorbed in the Tower buildings) was opened.

So, through the decades of the nineteenth century, Blackpool grew and flourished, developing its streets, its arcades, its promenades, looking after its water supply and sanitation, making new places of amusement (Raikes Hall, formerly a convent school, 1871) for its increasing summer patrons, and a steamer for their pleasure on the waters—the " Wellington " (1871), christened after the Wellington Hotel (opened in 1851). In 1870, at Easter, the new Promenade, constructed under the special Blackpool Parade Act of 1865, was completed and opened with banners and bunting, and lifeboat procession, and a carnival, and honoured by a full-page picture in the " Illustrated London News," and the " Blackpool Gazette " was founded by John Grime, printer, in Church Street (afterwards Councillor and Alderman).

GREAT INCREASE OF POPULATION.

The period of Blackpool's greatest development was 1860-1870. During these ten years it made amazing progress. While from 1840 to 1850 its population only went up by 300 odd (from 2,168 to 2,503), and only an increase of a little over a thousand from 1850 to 1860, it more than doubled from 1860 to 1870 (going up from 3,908 to 7,902). These were the prosperous years following the repeal of the Corn Laws, and development of railway facilities. Trade unionism, obtaining higher wages and more leisure for holidays for the working masses, helped to make Blackpool by giving the artisans and their families the means to go there in thousands and tens of thousands. Co-operation (started at Rochdale in 1844) encouraged thrift and saving, and by arrangement with the railway companies ran special trains at holiday times. It was the beginning of the cheap trip era, the day excursion. There are people alive who recollect those primitive cheap trips which started in the very early a.m., when passengers were often packed into cattle

(Reproduced from a woodcut in "Illustrated London News.")

Opening of the Promenade, 1870.

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trucks, and on arrival at the seaside were greeted with cries of " Hot Water " from a crowd of competing caterers.

Thus, during the first three-quarters of the nineteenth century, from 1800 to 1875, while invention was triumphing in the spread of railways, the bicycle, the sewing machine, spinning machines and looms, tramcars (first by horse-power and then by electricity), the discovery of chloroform, that blessed boon for those undergoing surgical operations, sanitary improvements, engineering feats such as the erection of the Menai Tubular Bridge, the Severn and Mersey Tunnels, the telephone, the invention of the scientific wizard Edison, and a thousand other devices and contrivances for mankind's convenience and comfort, while Dickens, Thackeray, George Eliot, Reade, Nathaniel Hawthorne, and others were writing their novels, and Tennyson, Browning, Swinburne, their poetry, Ruskin, Mills, and Spencer their philosophy, Darwin and Wallace, with the wonderful evolution theory, and Huxley his science; Livingstone, Stanley, and others with their African explorations, the legislation and oratory of Peel, Disraeli, Gladstone, Bright, the democratic agitations of Ernest Jones, Dan O'Connell, Henry Hunt, and others, the preaching of Spurgeon, Newman, Manning, Catholic emancipation, the rise of modern Spiritualism, the singing of Jenny Lind, Patti, Sims Reeves, the violin playing of Paganini, the acting of Edmund Kean, Booth, Macready, and of Grimaldi the famous clown, the melodious operas of Verdi, Balfe, Gounod, the mighty harmonies of Wagner, the pictures of Reynolds, Constable, Romney, Turner, Rosetti, and, of course, wars, the Afghan War, The Crimean War, the American War (and its effect, the Lancashire cotton famine, 1862-3), the Franco-German War (1870-1), followed by the formation of the French Republic, Blackpool developed from a tiny fishing village, with a few hundred inhabitants, to a glittering town of pleasure and amusements, with a population of ten thousand and in summer hundreds of thousands of visitors.

XIX.

THE BEGINNINGS OF MODERN BLACKPOOL.

Blackpool's greatest, richest period of progress, its remarkable modern development, began with the last quarter of the nineteenth century, when it became a borough. In 1874 (6th November), at a meeting of ratepayers called to discuss the subject, the Rev. N. S. Jeffreys (Parish Church) proposed that Blackpool draw up a petition for a Charter of Incorporation, and the resolution was carried unanimously. On the 19th of November, Mr. Wm. Hy. Cocker, J.P., at the meeting of the Local Board of Health, brought forward a similar motion, and in May, 1875, the Commissioner appointed by Queen Victoria's Privy Council to investigate and report on the matter attended the Health Board, when it was shown that the rateable value of the town had increased from £17,489 in 1863 to £73,035 in 1875—it had more than quadrupled in a decade. On July 16th came to Blackpool the official intimation that the lords of the Privy Council had granted the petition of the town to become a borough, to consist of six wards, with one alderman and three councillors for each ward.

In the same year (1875) the Winter Gardens was opened—also, perhaps to maintain the balance between pleasure and piety, the Primitive Methodist Church (Chapel Street)—and the first stone of St. Annes (last year, 1922, joined with Lytham, also became a borough) was laid. In 1877 the second Blackpool paper, "The Times," was started.

Thus in 200 years Blackpool had grown from a tiny village into a big town with a Town Council. As small hamlets develop into towns, it is necessary that some of the citizens be appointed as authorities and administrators to look after the common requirements of the population—the roads, the streeting, the

buildings, the water supply, the lighting, the cleansing and sanitation, etc.—for when men collect together in communities there must be some mutual undertaking and arrangement in regard to the common needs and conveniences of life, and men have found out, by the experience of ages, that it is better to work together, or municipally, in some things than separately or individualistically. While every man may well attend to his own home affairs, his own food, clothes, etc., it is obvious that it would be rather awkward if each one had to make his own streets, sewers, or lay his own water-pipes. Of course, all the inhabitants contribute to the general cost of the upkeep of a borough by paying rates, directly or indirectly (in the rent), and we are all concerned in the welfare of the borough, and if we are good citizens (which we ought to try to be) we take an intelligent interest in all its work and schemes, about which, sometimes, there are different or contrary opinions, and then the dispute is settled by the vote of the majority.

Thus we get Town Councils and elections, which —such is human nature—are often decided more by political party bias, or creed considerations, or selfish business interests, than by honest and rational thought for the general good. The good citizen (the Christian citizen, if you like), always asks, in regard to public questions, not what is best for me, or my party, or my sect, but what is best for my neighbours, for the whole community, for true religion in its broader interpretation? But we fear that voters of that character are rather rare, even in Blackpool. Still, we have advanced a great deal from the old Cave-man, the Stone Age man, who settled most questions, even political ones, if he had any, with a neolithic hammer-head, which you will admit (if you remember the picture and description of one in a previous chapter, or go to look at one in the Museum) would certainly be a very effective argument, conclusively smashing the opposition (unless his skull was abnormally thick, which was very likely, for, as any observant person knows, some of his descendants, even in our times,

have not yet quite grown out of that pachydermatous constitution).

BLACKPOOL'S FIRST TOWN COUNCIL.

But, of course there was none of that destructive sort of debate during Blackpool's first election contest, though there were no doubt wild and bitter attacks upon one another by the rivals, for that was the way of elections in those days, and I am not quite sure that we have yet altogether grown out of it.

On January 22nd, 1876 (occult students of the mystery of numbers, of which Blackpool, as a holiday town, where these strange sciences and their professors flourish, has its share, will notice these figures, as well as the 16th July), Blackpool's Charter of Incorporation got the Royal Assent, and two days later the almighty document was received by the Local Board of Health, now to be superseded by a Town Council, the election of which took place on Tuesday, the 11th of April, with the following results :—

(First three in each Ward elected.)

Claremont Ward.—John Braithwaite (C.), 114; William Bailey (C.), 107; Leslie Jones (C.), 94. Abraham Baxter (L.), 75; Adam Parker (L.), 69; Thomas R. Clarke (L.), 57; Henry Hall (Ind.), 47.)

Talbot Ward.—T. L. Masheter (C.), 303; J. E. B. Cocker (C.), 279; Thomas McNaughtan (C.), 269. (Thomas Bridge (L.), 142; John Wade (L.), 132; Isaac Wilde (L.), 108; Geo. L. Seed (Ind.), 94; Edward Gregson (Ind.), 46.)

Bank Hey Ward.—William Hy. Cocker (C.), 149; John Coulston (C.), 128; George Ormerod (C.), 108. (Henry Fisher (L.), 85; Alexander Moore (L.), 75; Richard Wade (L.), 72.)

Brunswick Ward.—George Bonny (C.), 122; Robert Mather (C.), 119; John W. Mycock (C.), 103. (William Read (L.), 84; James Fletcher (L.), 56; Robt. B. Huntington (L.), 42; Henry Whiteside (Ind.), 6.)

Foxhall Ward.—James B. Fisher (C.), 124; Alfred Anderson (C.), 109; Robert Bickerstaffe (C.), 103. (John Read (L.), 33; John Ingham (L.), 24; James H. Duncan (L.), 18; William Memory (Ind.), 0.)

Waterloo Ward.—Francis Parnell (C.), 85; Richard Gorst (C.), 83; John Hardman (L.), 42. (Henry Worthington (L.), 42.)

The candidate with the name of " Memory " is memorable for not getting a single vote. He did not even vote for himself, which shows an independent pride, at any rate.

Blackpool's first Town Council meeting was held at 11 o'clock on Wednesday, April 11th. It was mostly a preliminary swearing-in affair, followed by a dinner at Bailey's Hotel, several clergymen, the Rev. L. C. Wood, of Singleton, the Rev. C. H. Wainwright, and others, being present.

The following were elected Aldermen:—W. H. Cocker (Bank Hey Ward), T. McNaughtan (Claremont Ward), T. L. Masheter (Talbot Ward), J. E. B. Cocker (Brunswick Ward), J. Hardman (Waterloo Ward), and F. Parnell (Waterloo Ward).

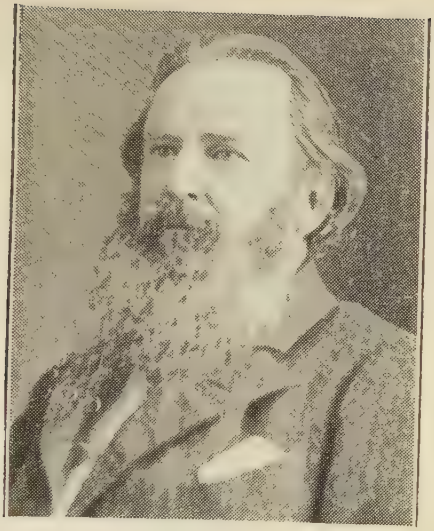
Alderman Wm. Henry Cocker was elected first Mayor of Blackpool. Town Clerk, William M. Charnley (solicitor), 1876-7. He was succeeded by Mr. H. P. May (who is still living), 1877-1883, followed by Mr. T. Loftus (see Chapter XXIV.).

Now what manner or men were they who composed Blackpool's first Town Council? As you will have noticed, in all histories, whether little local records or big national affairs, certain names stand out prominent, while the rest are remembered no more. Yet these forgotten unchronicled ones have had their share in doing the things that have made the fame of others, and the man who dutifully does " his bit " (to quote the Great War phrase), is every whit as worthy as he who gets a monument. The man with the small talent is not to be despised if he does his best, while the man with great talent is so much the less if he boasts of it. By the mystery of fate some men have more powers and more opportunities than

others, and their business, if they be of righteous stuff, is to use these gifts and luck in the service of mankind. Everywhere there are men, who, by some strength of character, or uncommon ability, or perseverance, or because of money, or family position, become leaders, rulers, discoverers, heroes, just as some others, alas! because of qualities or weaknesses or defects, become troublous and notorious as wrong-doers and criminals. Why men and women should be born thus different, while some should succeed while others are dogged by misfortune all their days, is a puzzle on which many men have preached and written for ages, but we are little nearer a solution of it. Instead of arguing and worrying about the riddle of destiny and desert, instead of envying the rich and great, or ignoring the poor and unfortunate, the bravest thing and the best thing is to do our utmost in our sphere, whatever and wherever it be, to be good citizens, good husbands, good wives, good neighbours, hurting none, helping all we can, keeping our hands clean and our hearts pure, and if we live in that ideal, whether we become renowned or not, whether we make money or not, we shall have lived righteously and nobly and shall evolve excellently.

THE FIRST MAYOR.

In a little book, a reprint of local biographical sketches by M. Hunter in the "Gazette," in which at this time (1876) one notices poems contributed by Samuel Laycock and Ben Brierley, the members of our first Town Council are described, and we note names once "familiar as household words" and some of which are still well known in public life—Masheter, Fisher, Mather, Bickerstaffe, Gorst. There is also "Bonny," which figures through the generations for over a century. Mr. W. H. Cocker, the first Mayor, was a doctor, like his father, who, early in the nineteenth century came from Tockholes (near Darwen) to Blackpool and built a house in Hygiene Terrace (which was next to Lane Ends Hotel—it is long gone now). He married a daughter of Henry Banks, the



(Photo, C. F. Wiggins, Blackpool.)
Blackpool's first Mayor, Dr. W. H. Cocker, J.P.

Old St. John's Market.

(See Page 171.)

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proprietor of the Lane Ends, and Banks is another name that, as you will have noticed, figures in the story of Blackpool's progress. This Henry Banks, known in his day as the "Father of Blackpool," took an active part in the erection of Blackpool's Parish Church, and Dr. Cocker was associated with all the movements for developing Blackpool. He wished it to be the finest seaside holiday resort in the world, and towards that end he always laboured, spending his own money freely and ever urging the ratepayers to fresh developments. He was a man with ideas, enterprise, tolerance, and humour (and a handsome fellow, too, to judge by his photograph in the Public Library), though rather anti-democratic in some respects, somewhat opposed to trade-unionism, and rationalistic in theology. Speaking once to the toast of "The Clergy," he referred to the days when they used to burn one another, and smilingly observed that while he gave the parsons credit for the good they did, he thought it would look better of some of them to revert to the simplicity of the fishermen who founded Christianity, when there were no bishops with palaces and £5,000 a year. Dr. Cocker did much for Blackpool, and he well deserved the honour of being its first Mayor and first Freeman. His name is commemorated by one of Blackpool's streets. The man with the most striking career in the first Town Council was Ald. Parnell, who, a penniless factory lad in the time of Napoleon, went into the Navy. When he was paid off at Plymouth, he had three shillings (his chest of clothes had been stolen). He walked to Manchester (316 miles)—and there his luck turned. He became foreman in a weaving-shed, then manager, and eventually went into partnership with two others, and made a fortune, coming to live retired at Blackpool for the benefit of his wife's health. This once penniless youth on tramp gave away over £10,000 in charity and built a Wesleyan school and chapel in Manchester.

Coun. Fisher was one of the Fishers of Little Marton, a strong Dissenting family—a descendant of Robert Fisher, who in 1763 got his house licensed as

a meeting-house for divine worship by such as would not go to the Church of England. This Councillor used to play the bass fiddle, while his brother played the clarionet, at the little old Bethesda Chapel (Kent Road). Coun. Gorst had for years been the town's Surveyor, and had a deal to do with the laying of the promenade sewers.

Robert Bickerstaffe, the lifeboat coxswain and steamboat manager, knew Thornber, and thus makes a personal link between modern Blackpool and the village of a hundred years ago.

Of the other members of the first Blackpool Town Council, there is nothing to be said, except that they did their work, and went to their reward.

In 1876, John Porter published his valuable "History of the Fylde," in which a considerable chapter is given to Blackpool's development up to the year of incorporation. John Porter, who came of an old Fylde family, was the youngest son of William Porter (founder and proprietor of the "Fleetwood Chronicle" and of the "Blackpool Herald"), and was keenly interested in the history and family pedigrees and antiquities of the district. He loved travelling abroad, too, and had a tragic end while holidaying on the Continent. He fell, in the dark of night, into a canal at Antwerp and was drowned, at the early age of 34, in 1881 (five years after writing his "History of the Fylde").

Blackpool's historians, by the way, all seem to have a rather malefic star in their horoscope. Perhaps the Fates and Clio (that's the ancient Grecian Muse of History, I believe) don't think Blackpool, and some of its prominent people, worth a chronicle, and so do all in their power to discourage those scribes who attempt it. At any rate, Blackpool's historians have been marked by misfortune, financial or otherwise, and learned that the majority of its citizens are not inclined to spend money on books, even when about their own local history, in which they ought to take some interest and pride. The first gentleman who ever tackled the task, Mr. Hutton, of Birmingham, candidly tells us, in his preface, that he never got paid

for half the books that were ordered. He says: "I was struck with the place, and wrote its history, price one shilling. The landlords met, agreed to take the whole edition, 750 copies, and I agreed to sell them at prime cost, sixpence each. Hudson and Bailey stood joint paymasters. These worthy gentlemen, stationed at a distance, which often tries a man's honesty, obliged me to stay four years for the money. Bailey in the interim broke; Hudson would only pay his own share." Thornber, Blackpool's first real historian, made little or nothing by his book, which now fetches over £1 a copy, second-hand, and had a sad, wild life, dying in a private asylum. Porter, the third, as has been seen, was accidentally drowned. Whether his book was a financial success I do not know, but I should think he did fairly well out of it, to judge by the long list of subscribers (over 1,000) at the end of his volume. What will happen to the fourth, I can't surmise—Kirkham probably—but I hope that the journalist who's on the job with the fourth venture—the first real and complete history of Blackpool ever written—will have better luck—for the credit of Blackpool and his own sake, though it's rather odd that his wife should have the first serious illness of her life while he was getting this book ready for the press, and that his little son was drowned at Blackpool years ago.

But that's digression, pardonable, I trust. Let us resume our history.

XX.

THE OLD CLIFFS.

So now we have got to our busy and growing Blackpool of the last quarter of the nineteenth century, a flourishing borough, a popular seaside resort, with its healthy air and jolly amusements. It was now developing in the matter of shows. Raikes Hall, though now with a young competitor in the shape of the Winter Gardens, nearer the sea—and the nearer you are to the sea at Blackpool and the nearer you are to the crowd and its cash—was in the prime of its patronage, with its boating lake, monkey-house, dancing-platform—for what would Blackpool be without dancing?—skating-rink, gardens and fireworks, and its great picturesque triumphal arch entrance and carriage drive, and near by, across the road, the old Raikes Smithy that has stood on the old highway into Blackpool for generations. There was also the Prince of Wales Theatre (1879).

There was, as yet, no Tower, and, of course, no cinemas, no Opera House, no Grand Theatre, no magnificent ballrooms, wonderful as Aladdin's palace, no alluring Pleasure Beach, with its alfresco fascinations and fun.

But there was the sea, the old yet ever-new sea, ever fresh because of the ceaseless charm of motion, and somewhat of mystery, the beauty of the ships, and the graceful flying of the gulls, the magic of its murmuring rune, the delight of its kissing touch, either to mere paddling feet or the whole body of the bather and swimmer, the spell of the ocean vistas and distances, seeming to link our little shore with infinity, the joy of the tide-washed sands and strolls on the beach by the cliffs and dunes, and the glamour of enchanting horizons where the sunset lavished pictures for the eye and visions for the soul.

Gynn Inn (and old " Uncle Tom's Cabin " on the top of the cliff to the left) about 1875.

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There was the pleasant walk decked with big white dog-daisies along the precipitous cliff path, with its stalls of sweets and fruit, and drinks and refreshments, and a photographic booth or two, from the North Pier to the Gynn, where some of the gipsies were camped. Above this path and bank of green sward was the carriage road through Claremont Park, with its toll-gate (abolished in 1899) and a penny to pay. Then, proceeding north from the Gynn, was the track over the bonny green high cliffs, with the wonderful view therefrom—west the great sea, perhaps foaming at the base of the high clay barrier that it was year by year eating away, or, if the tide was out, revealing the few rocks, like the currants in a cheap bun, Carlin, and the Pennystone Rock, near the site of the village submerged in the sixteenth century, and Black Combe and Lakeland across the water, or the Isle of Man if a clear sunset —east the meadows and the cornfields, with Bispham Church, and Thornton windmill, and the uplands and woodlands, and Poulton Church Tower amid the trees; and further beyond, the purple masses of the Bleasdale Fells and Longridge, and if a very clear day Pendle Hill, and on to the renowned "Uncle Tom's Cabin," on the edge of the high cliffs —the encroaching sea still fifty or sixty yards away, yet ever threatening to gobble up those cliffs and bring that structure down—the inn and entertainment room which all visitors made it part of their holiday programme to sample in those days, either by walking the one and a-half miles or taking it luxuriously in one of the horse-drawn landaus which plied numerously between the North Pier and Uncle Tom's Cabin forty years ago. Before Uncle Tom's Cabin was built, old inhabitants can tell of a little refreshment stall that stood there. Then a wooden cabin was built and a wooden dancing-platform in the open air, and later a pavilion. This was a few years before 1860, when Harriet Beecher Stowe's story of the slave trade, "Uncle Tom's Cabin," written in 1851, was making a sensation, and the proprietor resolved to name his place "Uncle Tom's Cabin," setting on the

roof, over the door, images to represent Uncle Tom, his wife, and the little " Topsy " of the famous tale that had so much to do with rousing the world's indignation against the black slavery in the South American cotton plantations. Mr. John Taylor, who lectures on " Old Blackpool," has interesting photos of Uncle Tom's (where his father was tenant for some time) and other places on the sea-front. Near Uncle Tom's Cabin, going inland towards the Knowl, and Knowl Farm, is Beryl Hill, where there was a beacon at the time of the Spanish Armada.

One of the picturesque characters of Blackpool at this time was the old bellman, who, amongst other duties and functions, announced the steamboat sailings by the " Wellington " or " Bickerstaffe," which began running in 1879, and—wonderful old boat, though getting rather rollicky in a rough sea—is still beating the briny after 45 years' service. The bellman was still in existence in 1883, but the clanging office expired with him.

As to-day, there were the country drives (but all by horse vehicles, no motors yet) for the visitors, and old Blackpool guide-books of the eighteen-eighties describe the attractions of Singleton, Weeton, Thornton Church, Poulton Market Place and stocks, Bispham village and Norbreck village (a favourite place of Edwin Waugh's, the Lancashire author; he wrote some excellent sketches about this neighbourhood and a visit to Gull Island, near Pilling, but years ago the gulls left that spot and now nest on the shore near Fluke Hall, Pilling), Shard Bridge (erected in 1863) and Cartford Bridge. " Bribery Hall " is also shown in a picture, and " Hoo Hill Windmill," the writer of the guide noticing and mentioning that characteristic feature of our region which strikes all observers. Mr. A. Hewitson, of Preston, makes similar reference in his witty and descriptive book, " Fylde Churches and Chapels " (1872)—namely, " that the numerous windmills add greatly to the picturesqueness of the Fylde and give it an aspect which Continental travellers are not slow to recognise as akin to certain parts of Holland."

In 1874, the old wooden windmill at Little Eccleston was burned down in a fifth of November frolic by "Mad Jack," Squire Wilson-Ffrance, of Rawcliffe Hall; he was a well-known character in convivial circles in the Blackpool of those days.

Not only had Blackpool its windmills in the old days, and many round about it, but our Fylde has the distinction of having built the oldest recorded windmill in the British Isles, probably in the world—Lytham Mill, first erected in 1190. It is therefore singularly and charmingly appropriate that Blackpool borough, the capital of the Windmill Land, should have four windmill sails as the crest on its coat-of-arms.

WRECK OF THE "BESSIE JONES."

A memorable wreck, because of the difficulty of rescue, was that of the "Bessie Jones," a Fleetwood schooner, with five of a crew, February 26th, 1880. In the night, in a terrible north-west gale, with icy wind and showers of hail, the vessel drifted on the Salthouse bank between St. Annes and Southport. The Blackpool Lifeboat, with "Bob" Bickerstaffe in charge, set out at daybreak and got to the wreck—the men clinging to the rigging, as they had been all night—but owing to the awful sea it took two hours before they could get the lifeboat in position to throw a lifeline. Four of the crew were saved. One had been swept overboard and lost. In 1885 Blackpool got a new lifeboat, "The Samuel Fletcher," and there was a great holiday parade and pageant at the launching, and on December 9th, 1886, this lifeboat went out in search of the St. Annes lifeboat, which had gone to the wreck of the "Mexico" and been capsized, all the crew, to whose memory there is a fine monument on St. Annes promenade, being drowned. The Southport lifeboat also capsized on this occasion, and all except two of the crew perished. The men on the wrecked "Mexico" were rescued, after a great battle with the tempest, by the Lytham lifeboat, under Coxswain Tom Clarkson.

LIFEBOAT RESCUES.

Sometimes, but happily very rarely now, Blackpool visitors have had the sensation of a wreck in their holiday sojourn. The great storms, of course, occur in the winter, though sometimes there have been summer tempests that have wrought havoc on the water. But if the visitors may not see a wreck, they may witness a lifeboat launch in August, about the time the Lifeboat Saturday (inaugurated by Sir Charles Macara, of St. Annes) collections are being taken.

In previous chapters (as also in my book "The Story of the Blackpool Lifeboat") I have given details of memorable wrecks and lifeboat rescues on the Fylde coast.

Here is a list of wrecks and rescues by the Blackpool lifeboat. The first Blackpool lifeboat was the "Robert William" (1864 to 1883), superseded by the "Samuel Fletcher" (1885), named after the Manchester gentleman who was the donor of it.

1864—Sept. 18, brig "St. Michael" (14 lives saved).

1865—Feb. 7, barque "Lexington" (14).
—Nov. 22, brig "Favorite," sank with all hands ere the lifeboat reached her.

1867—April 3, schooner "Clyde" (5).
—April 11, barque "Susan L. Campbell" (14).
—Oct. 3, schooner "Theodorus" (12).

1870—April 22, sloop "Sprightly" (2).
—July 5, yacht "Active" (4).

1873—Oct. 20, sloop "Leven" (2).

1880—Feb. 26, schooner "Bessie Jones" (4).
—May 22, pleasure steamer "Columbus" aground at Blackpool, the lifeboat helped to bring the 133 passengers ashore.

1882—Aug. 21, barque "Arethusa" (10).

1886—Dec. 9, wreck of the barque " Mexico " off Lytham; crews of St. Annes and Southport lifeboats lost by the boats capsizing, or being swamped; Blackpool lifeboat out searching for the missing boats. The crew of the " Mexico " (12) were rescued by the Lytham lifeboat.

1887—June 28, schooner " Esther Ann " (3).

1892—Oct. 9 (Sunday), " Sirene," drifted against North Pier, greatly damaging it. The crew got on the pier.

1894—Dec. 22, barque " Abana," off Norbreck (17).
—Dec. 22, fishing smack " Petrel," wrecked at the Gynn (2).

1896—April 13, fishing smack " Harriet " (4).

1897—June 16 (Wednesday), " The Foudroyant," wrecked opposite " Hotel Metropole " (28).

1907—Feb. 21, three-masted schooner, " Rebecca and Mary," on the Horse Bank, between Lytham and Southport—Blackpool and St. Annes lifeboats stayed by till a tug got the vessel off the bank.

1910—Feb. 18, Blackpool lifeboat went out to a dismantled schooner four miles out. Found her to be the " Prosperity," of Carnarvon, deserted. The derelict scooner was eventually taken to Fleetwood by a tug.

1914—Jan. 11—to motor boat in distress off Blackpool.

1923—Jan. 29, " Ophir," from Fleetwood, stranded between North Pier and Central Pier—lifeboat fetched crew of 8 men off. Vessel was eventually got away by a tug.

It will be noted that there has been no real wreck at Blackpool since the " Foudroyant " (26 years ago) in 1897.

There is also the lifeboat at Fleetwood, which has made many rescues since 1859, and the Lytham lifeboat (1857), which has done excellent service. The Fleetwood lifeboat has done most work, been out

oftenest, saved more shipwrecked sailors, than any other Fylde coast lifeboat, for as Fleetwood is a port, where vessels are continually coming and going, and also the station for a big fishing fleet, it is naturally the zone of disaster when tempest troubles the Irish Sea at the entrance of Morecambe Bay. Most tragic of all, however, is the history of the St. Annes lifeboat, the whole of whose crew perished, together with all but two of the crew of the Southport lifeboat, in endeavouring to rescue the crew of the German barque "Mexico" in one of the worst gales ever experienced in the Ribble estuary.

XXI.

FROM LITTLE INNS TO GREAT HOTELS.

The observant visitor, as also the contemplative resident, will notice that the dominating and most conspicuous buildings of Blackpool are the catering establishments and the places of entertainment. They indicate the town's chief functions and industries. They tower over all other structures. They are the largest and the grandest buildings. Even the Town Hall takes a back seat behind a big hotel, and the Tower amusement buildings, to quote the nomenclature of the shows, top the bill, while the great dome of the Winter Gardens looks down on the Parish Church. Prominent on the promenade are the huge hydros and hotels. Blackpool's motto is "Progress." My Lancashire friend Teddy Ashton merrily says it should be "Provender, Pleasure, an' Progress."

Those familiar with the Promenade aspect of today (1923) or for a generation back (say the last 25 years), though they are aware, in a vague general way, that there was not always a Tower and the great hotels and fine terraces, would have some difficulty in imagining what the scene was like before the present appearance evolved from years of growth and progress. It is difficult to imagine Blackpool without the Tower, like a ship without a mast. Yet such was the case only so short a time back as thirty years (1893), as middle-aged and old people still alive will remember.

We give a picture of Blackpool Promenade in 1888, showing the electric trams, the first in the kingdom, for Blackpool led the way in this invention, as in so many others, by inaugurating the electric tram system in 1885, as it had already pioneered with electric lighting on the promenade in September, 1879. There were nine Siemens lamps, each 6,000 candle-power, on pillars about 60 feet high. (The picture

shows the tall electric light standards, also the old sloping hulking and wooden groynes before the present grand promenade was constructed). The first electric trams, as you will notice, were not run by overhead wires and trolley, but by what was called the conduit system. The trolley was beneath the tram, in a groove or slot (you can see it running along the centre between the two wheel-lines) and the electric wire, too, was underground. You may also note the horse-vehicles (no motor-cars yet), and the ladies, if they like (and I have no doubt they will like), will be interested in examining what our fashion scribes call the " modes " of the day. Observe in the foreground the gentleman in the tall hat. That headgear is rarely seen on our promenade nowadays. Behind him are two ladies going in the opposite direction. They wear close-fitting tight long skirts. The umbrellas are up as sunshades, not because of any rain.

The pier in the distance on the left is the North Pier, and proceeding from that point, from the left to the right of the picture, we see, right at the back, Bailey's Hotel (now the Metropole), then Talbot Square, with the Assembly Rooms (now the Wine Lodge and Tivoli Cinema) used as the Theatre Royal, and the Public Library (opened by Lord Derby in 1880) in the front room above, called the Octagon Room, from its shape. In the centre of the Square is the covered drinking fountain (now a tram shelter); then the Clifton Hotel, Albion Hotel, Lane Ends Hotel, Prince of Wales Baths and Theatre (afterwards the Alhambra and now the Palace), next the Aquarium, Aviary, and Menagerie, with the grand orchestrion, and in 1889, a band for dancing—where now are the Tower buildings—the Aquarium being formerly the mansion of Sir Benjamin Heywood; next the Palatine Hotel buildings, with the round turret conspicuous; New Inn (a dangerous " bottle-neck " corner in former days, where the promenade opens to Central Station), Central Beach (then called South Beach), with Wells' dining-rooms, the " British Workman " restaurant, houses with front gardens, the Victoria Hotel, Brunswick Street, and the line of

buildings up to the premises now occupied by the Ellis family (phrenologists and character-readers and occultists). But there is no Tower nor Big Wheel looming over the house-tops. The Winter Gardens was in existence, and so was Raikes Hall (or Royal Palace Gardens (the latter place a considerable distance inland from the promenade). Southward, beyond the Central Pier, were the Foxhall, Manchester Hotel, and the rows of terraces on to South Shore and the old vicarage.

Such were the buildings on Blackpool front in 1888. You will notice that the Promenade, the road, itself is different from to-day, too, just as in 1888 it was vastly different from what it was in 1850, when, according to interesting old engravings (which may be seen on the walls of the Reference Room in the Public Library) there stood on the Promenade, at the bottom of Victoria Street, an ornamental flagstaff, in the midst of a little railed circular enclosure, this flagstaff being the mast of a schooner which was wrecked at South Shore (opposite the site of Crystal Terrace).

EVOLUTION OF THE PROMENADE.

The evolution of our great, grand Promenade from the little old original modest grass walk, with white rails, of 1788, is an interesting story, not without its romance of man's ingenuity pitted against the stormy might of Neptune. Even in the time of that picture of the 1888 promenade the high tides under a gale used to send the sea up Chapel Street and Lytham Road, and flood the front, where doors were barricaded and all chinks plastered with clay.

In 1828 the first Promenade developments began by making the grass-walk into a wide gravel path and extending it, and in succeeding years the hulkings and bunches of wooden stumps were put up to check Father Neptune (and, incidentally, the women used them for spreading the clothes out to dry on washing-day).

In 1860 the Promenade was asphalted and sprinkled over with white spar, for artistic effect

(though I should think it wouldn't be good for the eyes), and that is the germ of our present wide three-mile Promenade.

In 1865 the Blackpool Local Board (no Town Council till 1876) obtained by an Act of Parliament which it cost £2,159 to procure (all right for the legal gentlemen engaged), powers for Promenade improvements and extensions. They asked for power to levy a rate to meet the cost of promenade developments, but the House of Lords Committee decided that such cost should be borne only by those having property on the front, and so a special Parade Rate was levied on Promenade property. This rate, in the case of the section of Promenade from North Pier to South Shore, has been annulled, and abolished—as property on that section has paid its quota to the 1865 cost of improvements—a few years ago, but parts of the North Shore Promenade still pay it, though they too will soon be clear of it. The Board got power to levy tolls on the new Promenade, but this power was never used, indeed, never intended to be used, but prudently put in, like the wise clause in a later Act to levy a rate for advertising purposes, with a view to future emergencies and possibilities. Our Blackpool civic forerunners didn't always look ahead as they ought to have done, but in some cases they showed admirable foresight.

The new Promenade was to be made from Carleton Terrace (North) to South Shore, a distance of two miles. The work was begun in 1868, and the new Promenade—the one you see on the 1888 picture, costing £88,000—was opened on Easter Monday, April 18th, 1870, by Col. Wilson Patten (afterwards Lord Winmarleigh). The new Promenade splendidly justified itself by the great increase of visitors.

The North Shore Promenade was made in 1893, and the 60 feet widening scheme, from the Gynn to the Pleasure Beach, was begun in 1902 and completed and opened 25th July, 1905 (further details in Chapter XXIV.).

Having thus inspected, by means of the picture and history, Blackpool Promenade in 1888, let us now

leap still further back, a big jump of a hundred years, to 1784, and note the vast difference.

FOOD AND LODGING.

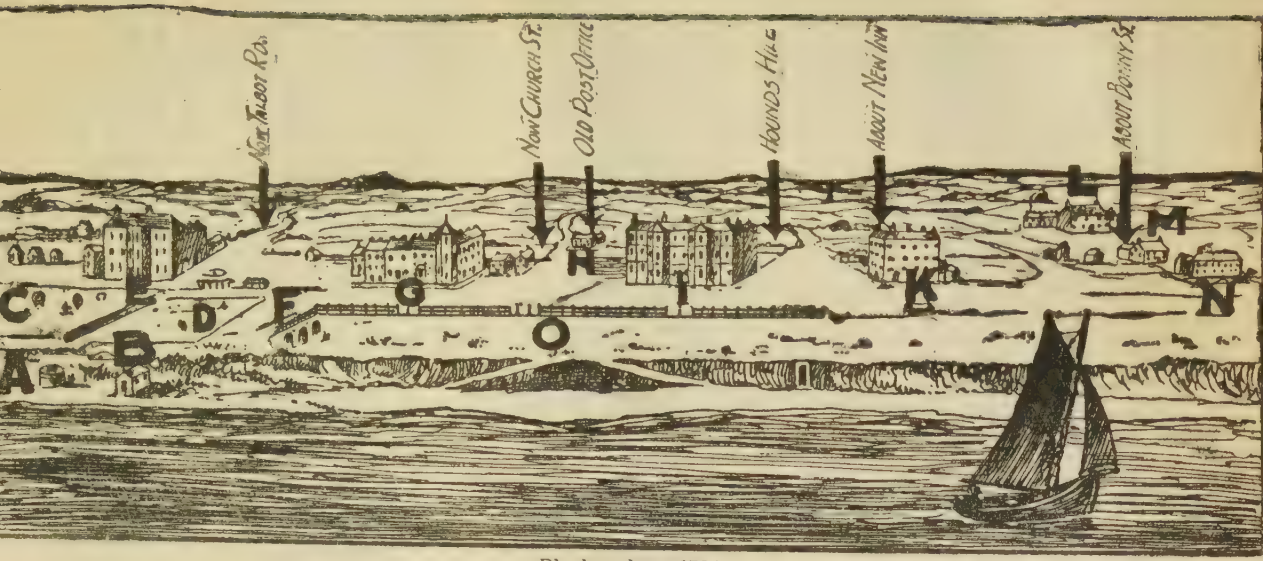
When Blackpool first began to gain some popularity as a bathing and holiday resort in the middle of the eighteenth century, its first care was to provide sufficient and satisfactory catering and accommodation. The stomach has the first call in human affairs, and though the æsthetic and poetic, in Gilbert's phrase, may deplore the gross arrangement by which that organ takes precedence in mortal life, it is the rule of Nature, of ancient and inscrutable ordination, and, whether we like it or not, beyond our power to alter, and therefore all we can do is to make the best of it. Besides, there is considerable enjoyment to be got out of eating and drinking, as witness our Mayoral banquets and other distinguished functions, and a good appetite is a thing devoutly to be desired. Indeed, it is Blackpool's business to create good appetites and then supply them with the requisite victuals, and who will dare to dispute that that is not as noble and neighbourly an aim as any honest man could have in this planet, this mixed lodging-house of laughter and tears, an aim pleasant in its results to the recipient and profitable to the vendor, which is more than can be said of many transactions in this world.

So Blackpool, when people began to patronise its bonny breezy shore, commenced to cater for them, providing houses of accommodation for eating and sleeping. It soon had inns—not for drinking purposes, but for food and lodging—and boarding houses. It did not bother about municipal development or places of worship. The nearest church was three miles away, at Bispham. Stomach first, soul after. That is the way of natural law, though I daresay there may be transcendentalists who can argue it topsy-turvy if we only give them a chance.

Young Blackpool didn't begin by putting up a town hall and planning great promenades. It just

devoted itself to looking after the prime human needs of the visitors who came in horse-drawn vehicles of all kinds (no trains, nor motors at that time—those inventions were as yet but in the dream).

An old print of Blackpool in 1784 (or 1784-86), see page 197, shows us the inns and taverns out of which our modern great hotels and hydros have developed. The view shows the sea-front from what is now the Hotel Metropole (E) to the Wellington Hotel (N), that is from the North Pier to the Central Pier. Further north, beyond C, was the Gynn Inn, while to the south, beyond N, there were only the Foxhall (then a farm) and a few cottages. The population of Blackpool at this time was only a few hundred. There were no shops, provisions having to be brought from Poulton. The Promenade was a green sward, six yards wide, with white wooden railings on the seaward side. The number of summer visitors, in August, was only a few hundred—no more than can now be put up at the Hotel Metropole or Imperial Hydro at one time. The present Tower or Empress Ballroom would have comfortably held the whole season's total visitors all at once, in this period (1770-1780), for they only amounted to 400 persons, according to Hutton's " Description of Blackpool " in 1788. There were only eight or nine small thatched cottages, eighteen huts, and one small inn (Forshaw's, now the Clifton Hotel), in 1769. Bailey's (now the Hotel Metropole) was not put up till later. We find it advertised in 1785 (June 14th) in " The Manchester Mercury," the proprietor being Laurence Bailey. In the same paper coaches are announced as running from Manchester to " Black Pool " (two words) daily, except Sunday, during the summer bathing season, from about the middle of June to the middle of September. Two contrasted pictures (in possession of a friend) of Bailey's Hotel show it in 1776 as a small three-storeyed building, and in 1876, a hundred years later, as a large, fine new building (and with still more developments since then). In 1876 the tariff was, table d'hote, 6-30, plain teas 1s. 6d., joint and vegetables 3s., breakfast



Blackpool in 1784.

A—Spring Well. B—Bailey's Bathing Houses. C—Archery Ground. D—Bowling Green. E—Bailey's Tavern. (now Hotel Metropole). F—Alcove. G—Forshaw's Tavern (now Clifton Hotel). H—Cooke's Old Post Office. I—Hudson's Tavern (now County and Lane Ends Hotel). K—Hull's Tavern (now Royal Hotel). L—Bonny's Wine House—Old Marjery's (now King Edward Hotel, Central Drive). M—Old farm and lodging-house. N—Old building, Cragg's Farm (near site of present Wellington Hotel). O—Public walk, grass promenade.

with eggs and cold meat 2s. 6d., ham and eggs 3s., apartments 6s. to 15s. a day, bedrooms from 2s. 6d.

THE OLD INNS.

The building marked "G," Mr. Forshaw's tavern, on the old picture, is the original of the Clifton Hotel, Talbot Square. It goes back at least to 1769. During the ensuing hundred years it was enlarged as circumstances required. About 1840 Robert Bickerstaffe, who afterwards built the Wellington Hotel, looked after the boats belonging to the Clifton. It is a pleasant bit of the romance of family progress that his son (Ald. John Bickerstaffe) is to-day chairman of the Clifton Hotel Company. In 1864, when Mr. William Birch was proprietor, it was floated with a capital of £15,000 (in £5 shares). Mr. Wm. Birch was one of the first directors, along with Richard Cookson, Robert Rawcliffe, and five other gentlemen who were not residents of Blackpool. Mr. Birch was a capable manager and a steady man, and though he kept an hotel, he, like all good publicans, loved moderation, and didn't encourage drinking to the neglect of business. He once said to a young bank manager who had begun to call often, "Let me give you a bit of advice. Don't frequent these places too much."

To keep pace with increasing patronage as Blackpool grew, the Clifton was mostly pulled down and rebuilt in 1868, taking in various adjoining properties, including a large house of John Wade's, and shops. The shops are now absorbed into the hotel. In 1885, the west shop was converted into a billiard room, and now what was Kay's bookshop is gathered in, too. So far back as 1894 the electric light was installed.

You will notice that on the old picture of 1784 there is no Talbot Road (no houses), and only a cottage or two at what is now the bottom of Church Street. The place marked "H" is the Post Office, now the Labour Bureau, Coronation Street, off Church Street, and it was a general store and lending library kept by George Cooke (particulars have been given in previous chapters).

The building marked " I," Mr. Hudson's tavern, is on the site of the present Lane Ends Hotel. John Hudson advertised his place as " Centre House " in the " General Evening Post " (London), in 1792. He described it as having " a large bow-window fronting the sea," 11 beds, servants, a bathing machine for his guests, and stables. But the Lane Ends, or the beginning of it, dates further back than 1792. In 1787 (October), the Lane Ends Inn, then in possession of Thomas Lewtas, was advertised as to let, at " fair valuation," with 70 beds, so it must have been going for some time to have acquired such accommodation. Before it was an inn it was a farm, as is revealed by the advertisement, which mentions a barn and a dozen acres of land. Then it became a coffee-house, with a dining-room close by. In 1808 it was run by Mr. Hy. Banks, who, according to Thornber, sought to meet the increasing demand for accommodation at Blackpool by proposing to erect company-houses and make the town comfortable and attractive for its patrons. He was a pioneer of progress. In 1864 the Lane Ends was levelled to the ground and entirely rebuilt, and since then has undergone considerable further improvement and extension.

The building marked "K," Hull's tavern, then Simpson's, is now the Royal Hotel, also at one time known as Hounds Hill Hotel. Where now is the Palatine Hotel were the Royal Hotel stables. About 1870, John Simpson kept the Royal, which was famous for its fine hams. It is said that the trippers remarked that they could smell 'em as soon as they got out at Talbot Road Station.

The building marked " L," Mr. Bonny's Wine House, also called " Old Margery's," stood in the fields at the east end of what is now Chapel Street—The King Edward Hotel now occupies the site of " Bonny's." In 1787, John Bonny advertised that he had a very large dining-room and lodging-room for 20 beds, in addition to the house lately occupied by his father-in-law, Mr. Bickerstaffe. Ladies and gentlemen 2s. 2d. per day each, children 1s. 6d., ser-

vants 1s. 6d., table beer included. Horse's hay and grass 8d. per night."

Some buildings in their time, like men, play many parts, and Bonny's, after being an inn and lodging-house, became a school (our temperance friends would call that a step forward) for a time, about 1860-3. It was known as Bamber's School. The dominie, because he had a dead or paralysed right arm, which hung limp, and swung about like a pendulum, was nicknamed—everybody had a nickname in our grandfather's days—"Owd Swing." One of the teachers was called "Fresh Eggs," because he used to sell hen-produce in his spare time. He is said to have had quite a style of his own. Once, when a woman customer was asking questions, he replied, "I cannot waste my time and talents in discussion, ma'am, but must proceed with business." Oysters are beloved of holiday visitors, and there have always been many vendors of that shell-fish in Blackpool. About this time, 1855-65, there was a noted character nicknamed "Paddy Oyster," from his avocation. He evaded rent and landlord troubles by living in a big cask, with wife and child, on the spare land that is now the market place. Later on he got a big packing-case and dwelt in that till he quitted the town.

All about Bonny's (or King Edward's) was fields in the "sixties." An old Blackpool native tells me that the lads used to make a short cut across the fields from Central Station to the school.

The "M," "Mr. Elston's," in the old picture, was a cottage-farm and lodging-house in what is now Chapel Street. The "N" "old building," near the site of the present Wellington Hotel, which stands where stood the old Blackpool village pinfold (a circular-walled enclosure where stray horses and cattle were kept till claimed), is probably Cragg's Farm, of which the old barn is still standing in Dale Street (just behind the Wellington Hotel).

Between those buildings shown in the old picture, other inns and houses were built. Talbot Road was made up to the station, and in 1845 Talbot Hotel erected. At the opposite corner to the Lane

Ends Hotel was built the "Albion," with stables in Bank Hey Street. In the latter half of last century, a 'bus used to run from the "Albion" to Lytham. At the other side of the Lane Ends Hotel was erected the "Beach" Hotel. In the "sixties" of last century it was owned by Thornber, Blackpool's first historian (after he had lost his place as Vicar of the Parish Church), but he did not live there, though he frequented it, along with a number of roystering spirits known as "The Long Gang," notorious for their bacchanalian revelries and devilries. Thornber, when under the influence of alcohol, was an awkward customer, and, as he was a big fellow, dangerous in his quarrelsome bouts. Charles Dickens stayed at the Beach Hotel in April, 1869. The Tower Vaults now occupies its site. At the spot marked "K" is now the New Inn.

Between "K" and "N" is the Victoria Hotel, put up by Mr. Bonny, the licence being transferred from his wine-house, and at the corner of Chapel Street was Wylie's South Beach Hotel, afterwards South Pier Hotel, on the site now occupied by the show called "Fairyland," with the "Trocadero" next door.

Compare the old 1784 picture with the 1888 photograph, showing the same section of our Promenade from the Clifton to the Wellington a hundred years later, and you will see the changes. The 1888 photograph gives a picture of Blackpool before the Town was built and the Promenade widened.

NORTH SHORE.

As already mentioned, and as is obvious from the picture itself, that old engraving of 1784 does not show the Promenade northward of Bailey's (Metropole) to the Gynn, nor southward from Bonny's Inn (Chapel Street) to South Shore. At that date these two districts north and south were almost uninhabited.

Taking the north section, there was no Uncle Tom's Cabin, but green cliffs, stretching at least a

hundred yards more seaward than to-day, for even in 1860 there was a big field on the west side of the old Uncle Tom's. A century of denudation has played havoc with the cliffs. But the old Gynn Inn was there and a few scattered farms and cottages.

North Shore development began with the Blackpool Land and Building Company in 1863. This Company created the Claremont Park Estate, laying out roads, sewering, etc., and erecting the Imperial Hotel, the work, on a tender of £20,000, being by Messrs. Clegg and Knowles, architects. Mr. Clegg is still alive at a good old age in Manchester. The Imperial Hotel itself cost £14,947, the contractors being Henry Southern and Son, Preston, in 1866. Old Hill Farm, just behind the site of the hotel, was made into stables. The Company made a road along the cliffs and put up toll-gates, one at either end of the estate. The main toll-house stood at a spot between Carlton Terrace and Lansdown Crescent on the seaward side of the road (about what is now the beginning of the middle walk). The toll was a penny to pedestrians, 3d. for a weekly ticket, children under twelve free, carriages 3d. The toll collector was George Whiteside, a one-armed man (lost his right arm by an accident in a joiner's shop). He wrote with his left hand. The Whiteside family, all great snuff-takers, were excavators and contractors. There was another toll-gate at the Gynn end of the Claremont Park Road or Drive, and Gipsy Sarah camped close by (removing later, as buildings and traffic grew, to the sandhills near the Star Inn at South Shore). When the Blackpool Corporation took over the Claremont Park Road and abolished the toll, in 1899, George Whiteside became a School Board attendance officer.

The word " Park " as applied to Claremont was hyperbolic. It was not what anyone would call a " park " in the true sense of the term. It was merely an enclosed road and promenade. There were no trees, no gardens. A lady who has worthily been a Mayoress of Blackpool relates that long before she resided here, when a girl on holiday, she walked along from the North Pier towards the Gynn, and coming

to the toll-house and sign, "Claremont Park," thought she would sample the Park. So she paid her penny, and passed through the gates, looking for the "park." Discovering, to her disappointment, no traces of anything like a park as known in other places, she came back and asked the toll-man where the Park was.

If you did not wish to go through the Park toll-gate, there was a public path, on the west side of the Park road, along the cliffs from the North Pier to the Gynn. Owing to sea encroachment, the cliffs were crumbling down, and this path was in places a narrow and precipitous ledge. There were refreshment stalls and a photographic booth, partly hanging over the edge of the undermined cliff and propped by long planks, belonging to Mr. S. Wolstenholme (put up about 1873), along this path, which on the land side was abundantly decked with great white dog-daisies in summer.

In 1873, the Imperial Hotel was sold to a new separate company for £32,000, thus more than doubling its value in seven years.

The Park Company, which is still in existence, owning considerable property in the district, in 1876 sold land to Mr. W. H. Cocker (the first Mayor), for the Sea Water Company and Baths, now Cocker Street Baths, taken over by the Corporation. In 1882 permission was given to omnibuses to run through the Park, and in 1899 the Blackpool Corporation purchased the land and road between the toll-gates. In the same year the Park Company sold land on which to build the Warley Road Congregational Church.

In 1900 the Imperial Hotel added Turkish baths and ballroom, and in 1903 more bedrooms, and in 1905 the dining-room, lounge and palm court. To-day (1923), the large dining-room will seat 450, the Louis XVI. room 100, and there is sleeping accommodation for 430. During the early years of the war over 200 officers were at the Imperial, and from April, 1918, to May, 1919, it was used by the military authorities as "The Atlantic Hospital." Since 1919 the hotel has

been renovated, front entrance enlarged, and other improvements.

Fumbler's Hill was the rise from the site of the Derby Hotel (Cocker Street) to the Park Hotel. There used to be in Blackpool's infancy a cottage here for visitors, kept by " Old Ned and Nanny," celebrated in rhyme. It may have been this good dame who, when patrons began to grow more fastidious, remarked to the Rev. W. Thornber (Blackpool's first historian, 1837), " They used to be content, so long as they were in Blackpool, if we crammed a dozen in a bed, but now they grumble if there's only five."

At the top of Fumbler's Hill was erected the Royal Edward Hotel, afterwards Claremont and Park Hotel (occupied by the well-known landlord, Mr. Ralph Rushton) and now re-christened the " Carlton."

Carlton Terrace, Regent Terrace, and the handsome Lansdowne Crescent, grew out of the Claremont Park developments, and beautified the front in 1884.

SOUTH SHORE.

So much for the north end of Blackpool not shown in the 1784 picture. Let us now take the south end from the old pinfold site of the Wellington Hotel, built in 1851 by Robert Bickerstaffe (uncle of "Young" Robert Bickerstaffe, afterwards manager of Central Pier, and father of Ald. John Bickerstaffe). " Old " Robert Bickerstaffe had some small boats, and tenants of adjacent houses complained that these obstructed the view when drawn up on the beach. Somebody suggested to Old Bob that he should buy the pinfold build a cottage there and make a yard for his boats. The pinfold and land belonged to Squire Clifton. Old Bob went to see the agent, Mr. Fair, who said he could have the site for £85. Old Bob hadn't so much money, but he raised half, and that was accepted on account. Then the idea of an hotel occurred, friends helped, plans were drawn up by John Braithwaite, known as " Straight-edge," of South Shore, and the hotel was erected in 1851, at a cost of £1,700.

Blackpool, from Central Pier to Manchester Hotel (about 1868).

The large building to the left is York Hotel, now demolished, "Wonderland" being close to its site. The building next but one to the right is Wylie's Hotel (in the street now called Foxhall Road). Next is a gap to what is now Foxhall Square, with Foxhall Hotel near to it, then a high cobble-stone wall and a railed field. The building on the right is Manchester Hotel, at the beginning of Lytham Road.

South Shore, from Manchester Hotel to Starr Inn (about 1868).

Left is the Manchester Hotel and houses and terraces to Station Old Road (South Shore). At the far right is the bottom of Dean Street and the Old South Shore Vicarage, then sandhills (where now are the Beach Hotel and the little parks at the end Withnell Road and Osborne Road and the Casino and Pleasure Beach). On the extreme right of the picture, very small, at the edge of the water and sands, is the Starr Inn.

(Photos lent by R. Westhead.)

PUBLIC
LIBRARIES.

The difference between the original £84 and the value of that same site to-day is a pregnant item for the student of land values and financial increment due to town growth.

Just beyond the Wellington was the Yorkshire House, afterwards York Hotel, now gone. It stood where " Wonderland " is, but a little back from the Promenade. Between the Wellington and Yorkshire House was a farm, called Cragg's Farm, as far as I can learn, all gone now, and the walls of its great barn may still be seen in Dale Street. Then there was the old Foxhall, a farm in 1784, and by-and-by, according to Thornber in 1837, " a jerry-shop." At this date the site of the Manchester Hotel was a field where Mr. Wm. Butcher, of Raikes Hall (a private residence in those days), exercised his racehorses.

In 1784, along the front from the Foxhall, there were no houses, and no South Shore. The first house at South Shore was built on land adjoining what is now the Promenade corner (south) of Waterloo Road, about ten yards north of the present Brighton Hydro —there are two old cottages on the site now—by Thomas Moore, who was the miller at Great Marton Windmill (now demolished), standing where now is the yard of the Oxford Hotel, at the inland end of Waterloo Road. Mr. William Butcher (recently deceased), a well-known South Shore gentleman, and a welcome speaker at parties and meetings, because of his genial humour, presented me with a paper-rack made from a piece of the wooden dome of the old windmill—his grandfather was a nephew of the old miller. At that time South Shore was nearly all sand dunes and Waterloo Road had then the rural appellation of " Cow-gap Lane " (till twenty years ago). One of the miller's sons, Alexander Moore, a doctor and a prominent public man in the middle of last century, also built some houses called " Doctor's Cottages," on the site now occupied by the Queen's Hydro. When Thomas Moore first began to build at South Shore he was looked on as a foolish speculator, but he saw the possibilities of the locality, and Father Time, as he generally does, has silenced the scoffers

and critics, and justified the pioneer's vision. South Shore's wonderful development speaks eloquently for its founder. A hundred years later we find Tyldesley Terrace, Eaves Terrace, Crystal Terrace, improving the front from the Foxhall southwards. The oldest inn on the front at that end of the town was the Britannia Inn, at the Promenade corner of Shaw Road. Its site is now a piece of vacant land. This inn, in the nineties, was demolished by a company formed to build a grand new hydro and shops, but the scheme did not materialise. The Britannia Inn was in existence in 1839. The crew of twenty-six, of the " Crusader," a large vessel wrecked opposite what is now the Star Inn, then a coastguard's house, were brought to the Britannia Inn. At this time there were farms and orchards where now are Dean Street and Osborne Road, and Lytham Road was a country lane, with farms here and there (and, of course, no railway bridge nor railway at South Shore).

The Queen's Hydro, with its dining-room to accommodate 150, ballroom, lounge, billiard-room, baths, and other up-to-date equipment (it was used as a convalescent hospital during the Great European War, 1914-1918), was originally the South Shore Hydropathic Hotel, and was advertised as such in an 1883 Blackpool Guide.

Along with the inns and hotels, dining-rooms and restaurants sprang up. Old guide books of 1880-1890 show the " British Workman and Station Coffee Palace, manager Joseph Heap " (now the well-known Alderman), and other dining-rooms in Market Street and Talbot Square. Jenkinson's Cafe goes back to 1825, and it is an old familiar and honoured name. It was started by two Misses Jenkinson. In 1897, the year the " Foudroyant " was wrecked at Blackpool, Jenkinson's was formed into a limited company, the premises enlarged and improved, with fine ballroom, and appropriately there is a grand " Foudroyant " staircase, made of oak from Nelson's old ship.

XXII.

"PROGRESS."

Blackpool, since its incorporation, has certainly acted on its proud motto, "Progress," though, as is inevitable in all human affairs and undertakings, it has sometimes made mistakes, neglected opportunities, and been municipally hindered by the short-sightedness of some individuals and the private interests of others, as happens everywhere. But, in the main, it has advanced admirably, and may take a decent pride in its achievements. In many municipal innovations and improvements, as well as the holiday amusements which are its great business, it has led the way.

It was the first town in the kingdom to use the electric light for public purposes, the Promenade being lit by electricity in 1879, an event celebrated with one of those gala days for which Blackpool has always been renowned; and, a year after it had been created a County Parliamentary Division (1884), now having one M.P. as well as a Mayor, the electric tramway, the first in the country, was opened on the Promenade (1885), with festivities and decorations. Many people yet alive will remember that first electric tram—the conduit system, the trolley not being overhead, as to-day, but the cars run by electric contact, by means of a slot in the ground, in the centre of the lines.

In 1887, when Blackpool got its own Borough Police Force, the town was building and developing in all directions; and in 1890 it was by far the largest town in the Fylde, with a population of 20,000, over double that of Fleetwood, five times that of Kirkham, eight times that of St. Annes, three times that of Lytham, and fifteen times that of Poulton, which but a hundred years before had a greater population than Blackpool.

The establishment of banks indicates the business development of a town. In 1874 Blackpool had only three small banks, to-day (1923) there are seven big ones, and, if we count the branches—South Shore and the suburbs—there are over twenty.

The chronicling of a few dates, memorable for some municipal development or event or wreck, brings us to the end of the nineteenth century, such a wonderful century for the world, with its trade union activities and consolidations and great strikes—the Dock Strike in London (1890), and the growth of the modern Labour and Socialist movement; no new thing, for we find the democratic discontent and striving for better conditions in the early years of Queen Victoria's reign, when Thornber was writing his "History of Blackpool." There is the Chartist movement and the Anti-Corn Law agitation of the eighteen-forties and the Christian Socialist propaganda of the fifties, the remarkable growth of the Salvation Army (started by General Booth in 1865—he visited Blackpool and spoke at the Hippodrome in 1898) with its splendid social and rescue work, the Church Army, modern Spiritualism (originated in the United States in the fifties), the Christian Science creed, the inauguration of School Boards (1870), the abolition of school fees, free education (1891), and the erection of the splendid schools of our time, which, though costly, yet pay for themselves a thousand times over in creating efficient citizens and reducing crime. Surely it is better to pay a few pence to train children in the right way than to pay pounds to maintain prisons for those who go astray. There is the spread of Christian humanitarian ideas that the duty and business of a nation is to show some practical religion by playing the Good Samaritan and the consequent founding of thousands of charitable institutions, hospitals, homes (in which good work Blackpool is to the fore), for the assistance of the poor, the afflicted, the crippled, the weak, the unfortunate and the fallen. Also the century of the development of sport, cricket, bowling (Blackpool is renowned for its great Bowling Tournaments), cycling—there came the bicycle for women,

Mrs. J. R. Gath, followed by Mrs. C. Whalley, being the first lady in Blackpool to ride a two-wheeled machine—walking (ramble clubs), swimming, golf, and the phenomenal popularity of football, also the introduction of whist drives, the first in Blackpool being held at the house of Mrs. Wylie, in Shaw Road, for members of the Cycling Club, and the spread of educational institutions and others for the workers, lectures, the temperance movement, village clubs, musical and literary and antiquarian societies, and many others, even societies for preventing cruelty to animals as well as to children, all doing their share to make the world more interesting and more happy.

Surveying the beneficial changes and improvements from the time of the Romans in Britain and the Fylde to our own day, we see how the world has progressed, and is still going forward, for the nineteenth century was the wonderful century for Blackpool as well as for the world of which it was a part.

WRECK OF THE "SIRENE," AND OTHERS.

In 1892, October 9th, Blackpool had an exciting Sunday morning. A Norwegian barque, the "Sirene," after weathering a squally night, was driven ashore in a hurricane of wind and rain. She ran aground about noon in the angle formed by the North Pier entrance and Promenade. The lucky crew simply stepped from the wreck to the pier, which was badly damaged by the falling of a mast and the banging of the hull against the south side of the pier.

In 1893, Blackpool's third pier, picturesque with its grand minaretted pavilion, the Victoria Pier, South Shore, was opened, and the Corporation electricity works were founded.

The year 1894 gave Blackpool its unique distinctive sign and gigantic landmark of Windmill Land, for on Whit Monday, May 14th, the Tower, after three years since laying the foundations, was opened. Its total height to the flagstaff is 521 feet, to the crow's nest 480 feet. Also this year the Grand Theatre was

opened, and, just before Christmas, the large barque, "Abana," was wrecked off Norbreck, her crew of seventeen being rescued by the Blackpool Lifeboat (under Coxswain Cartmell). A big fragment of the hulk may still be seen partly embedded in the sands off Norbreck.

In 1895, the Hippodrome, in Church Street, was opened, and in the October (1-2) a terrific north-west gale strewed our coast with wrecks and made many widows and orphans in Fleetwood. In the dawn of the Wednesday, October 3rd, I saw three Fleetwood fishing smacks driven ashore between Victoria and Central Piers—the crews managed to get safe to land. One fishing smack, with a despairing man clinging to the mast, went down just beyond the Central Pier jetty. On a sandbank at South Shore was another wreck, and others at Norbreck and Lytham. The gale was one of the fiercest that ever wrought havoc and mourning on our coast. It made widows of the wives of ten Fleetwood fishermen, and there were 27 orphans.

I saw some of those Fleetwood women on Blackpool Promenade seeking tidings of their missing husbands, and as I beheld the woe in their faces I thought of Kingsley's poem—

> "Three fishers went sailing away to the west,
> And the night-wrack came rolling up ragged and brown,"

and the storm, and the catastrophe, and then

> "Three corpses lay out on the shining sands.
> In the morning gleam as the tide went down,
> And the women are weeping and wringing their hands
> For those who will never come home to the town,
> For men must work, and women must weep, . . .
> Though the harbour bar be moaning."

A generous fund was subscribed for the Fleetwood widows and orphans, Blackpool helping greatly.

In 1897, June 16, Nelson's old flagship, "The Foudroyant," anchored off Blackpool as a show for visitors, was wrecked in a summer storm, the lifeboat saving the men and boys on board. The wreck provided an unusual seaside spectacle

for holiday visitors. Mr. C. Noden, the alert and genial manager of the Blackpool Corporation Advertising Bureau (by the way, Blackpool is the only holiday resort that had the sagacity to get Parliamentary sanction for levying a fraction of rate for advertising purposes), telegraphed the news that Nelson's ship was ashore at Blackpool all over the country, and soon the trains were full of crowds of people coming to see the sight.

CHARACTERS ON THE SANDS.

In the Blackpool of the eighteen-eighties and nineties, when so many municipal innovations were being made, there were, of course, frictions and controversies. Some people opposed trams, some opposed Board Schools, some opposed everything. The gentlemen who ran horse-'buses pathetically asked where would their livelihood be if the Corporation laid tram-lines everywhere? A very natural question, no doubt, but they were only thinking of themselves, and not of the public benefit. The same with Board Schools. There were terrible discussions about the expense to the rates. Then there was the temperance party versus the licensed victuallers. Ministers, whose names were renowned in those days, notably the Rev. J. S. Balmer, attacked the Watch Committee and made startling statements. Two other famous Nonconformist preachers were the Rev. James Wayman and the Rev. Samuel Pilling. Among the Church stalwarts were the Rev. C. H. Wainwright and Rev. N. S. Jeffrey. Father Time has reduced all these great contests and arguments to the dust of the grave—the ill and rancour of them have faded away, but the good in them, the fruits of them, the result of the rain and wind of opposition, and of the sunshine and care of the idealists, survives and is serving our generation.

During the decades already mentioned, the last twenty years of the last century, the sands became a sort of Fair, an assemblage of oyster-vendors, " rock "

sellers, Punch and Judy shows, ventriloquists, corn curers, and other sorts of doctors, phrenologists and palmists, as well as donkey-stands—and camels were once tried as rivals to the donkeys—about the time (1905) the big Barnum's Show paid a flying visit to Blackpool, pitching its tent in a field on Lytham Road, near South Shore old station, and went away, I should think, convinced that in the matter of shows Blackpool could even teach the great American circus hustler a thing or two—but the " ship of the desert " did not " catch on " on our sands.

Some of those merchants on the sands were " characters." There was " Professor " Wells, with his calculations; Professor " White," with his wit; Professor Charlie Sennett, with his prescriptions; " Billy Muggins," with his dialect drollery and his amusing curt ways of flinging his goods about, and others. In front of the Central Pier the fine-looking and scholarly " Sylvanus " was a noted and popular dispenser of remedies.

Our townsman, Mr. Alfred Lomax, has some amusing pictures, taken from note-paper packets sold in the town, of the sands in the 1860's. They show ladies paddling in crinolines—a tickling sight—and getting into row-boats, the spreading skirts bulging out like a balloon. He has also a droll picture of "Ally Sloper," a bulby nose and cigar in his mouth, the famous character, in a popular comic paper of the nineties, at Blackpool.

Off the sands, in a little shop in a little street running up to the market, " Doidge," the auctioneer, (still alive and active at the age of eighty-eight) was a well-known figure, whose breezy manner and brisk humour delighted the throngs who packed his shop—except, perhaps, sometimes when they had gone in out of the rain and he threatened to turn 'em all out and lock the place up if they didn't bid.

XXIII.

FROM BARN DANCES TO PALATIAL BALLROOMS.

In the natural sequence of human affairs, Blackpool's next development, after catering and accommodation, was in the direction of entertainment for its visitors. There must be no dull hours, no dragging days. The outdoor charms of sea and beach and grassy cliff must be brightly supplemented by recreation and amusement. Dame Nature is all very well as far as she goes, but Art must supply diverting change and holiday variety. Moreover, there would be profit in it, money-making, that common stimulus which is the source of so much splendour and so much struggle and trouble, for, alas! there are not plums and prizes for everyone.

If you are desirous of making money at Blackpool, the surest way is to get hold of an inn or a restaurant (I cannot speak from experience, my lines having run other ways, but thus I am assured by those who are authorities in the art of accumulation). The third speedy method is by providing a show of some sort. The crowd, though it is also very often led by the nose, first of all follows its mouth, then its eyes and ears, and those who cater for those organs have their reward.

A hundred or so years ago, fifty years ago, Blackpool's amusements were as near nil as may be, no theatres, no big ballrooms, but dances in the inns or adjacent barns, no great concert rooms, but then, of course, there was not the holiday multitude that we get to-day.

OLD-TIME AMUSEMENTS.

Blackpool's first holiday amusements and recreations were outdoor ones (always the healthiest and

best). I sometimes think now, with all respect to our magnificent ballrooms, that it would be far prettier if every ballroom floor was a springy green sward and the ballroom walls leafy woodland and verdant upland, with lads and lasses dancing in the open air to an orchestra in the shade of the foliage.

Probably in those old days there would sometimes be a dance on the grassy cliffs to a fiddle—indeed, there was on one occasion, anyhow. Mr. Thornber tells us of three old dames who did a dance at the Coronation celebration of George the Fourth. There were, at any rate, bowling greens, and horse riding on the long fine stretches of sand, as well as bathing and boating, and the archery butts, and no doubt much of Cupid's archery, too, for that is the oldest and most popular game in the world, and is always being played everywhere, very fortunately for those who provide other games and entertainments, for without it the supply of patrons for either provender or pleasure would be cut off, and everybody would have to shut up shop.

There were also concerts in those old days, at the inns, and stage-plays in an old barn, as already mentioned, while the Clifton and other inns had ballrooms.

Also, during this period (1820-1846), we find the beginnings of local caterings for the spiritual as well as the physical—the Parish Church and Nonconformist chapels were erected.

Then (as already told in Chapter XVII.), in 1837, when shops and houses were increasing, Blackpool's first place of entertainment, the Victoria Assembly Rooms and afterwards "Crystal Palace" (seven shops, with a room and balcony above them), was erected at the bottom end of Victoria Street (now E. R. Green's premises). In 1867, the Prince of Wales Arcade and Assembly Rooms were opened, and in 1868 the Assembly Rooms and Arcade in Talbot Square (now the Tivoli, Wine Lodge, and shops)—with restaurant, billiard room, and a large saloon, with gallery, for theatrical and other entertainments. (Later, as already related, the front

upper room of this structure, the Octagon Room, became the Public Library for a time.)

From 1870, when the new Promenade was opened (as told in a previous chapter), and Blackpool had now got two piers, North (1863) and Central (1868), dates the evolution of Blackpool's places of amusement.

RAIKES HALL.

The Raikes Hall Company was formed in 1871 by some local gentlemen, to purchase Raikes Hall and grounds, the mansion originally built and occupied by Mr. Wm. Butcher, on whose tombstone in Bispham Churchyard is this epitaph:—

> **"His pleasure was to give or lend,**
> **He always stood a poor man's friend."**

In 1824, the Raikes Hall mansion and estate were purchased by Mr. Hornby (that's where the name of the adjacent Hornby Road comes from). In 1860 the Hornbys left Blackpool, and the hall became a Catholic convent school till the Convent at Layton was built. Then the Raikes Hall Company acquired the estate, the first secretary being Mr. Ralph Rushon, of the Beach Hotel (to which he came in 1863), and, years after, of the Carlton Hotel, and soon that once immensely popular gardens was delighting thousands of Blackpool visitors with its classic double-arched gateway entrance for carriages, its grand statuary avenue, its skating rink and conservatory, monkey house, boating lake, pavilion theatre (and concert hall), open-air dancing platform, and its magnificent fireworks displays (like the celebrated pyrotechnic spectacles at Belle Vue Gardens, Manchester). Nobody came to Blackpool without visiting Raikes Hall, of which Geo. B. Taylor was the manager in the eighties.

A MAYOR AS "DICK TURPIN."

It is romantically interesting to know that the worthy gentleman who is to-day (1923) Blackpool's

Mayor (Councillor H. Brooks) was one of the circus performers at Raikes Hall, when Romeo Quagheini, Charles Allen, and " Ohmy " (Smith) ran a circus show there, in the summer of 1883. That, however, was not his first appearance in Blackpool. As acrobat, gymnast, horse-rider, and all-round circus man, young Brooks was at Charles Welldon's circus in Blackpool in 1882. This circus, built by R. Birkett, was at the bottom of Albert Road, opposite Walker Taylor's Garage, which was then the bowling-green of the Clarence Hotel. Our Mayor often played the hero, riding " Bonny Black Bess," in that old familiar circus classic, " Dick Turpin's Ride to York," and, very likely, when his memory merrily looks back and makes comparisons with his present-day avocations, he deems it a less onerous job than keeping an argumentative Town Council in order. But no doubt his experience in subduing fiery circus steeds stands him in good stead in controlling the Town Council, which, in its way, is a sort of circus, too, at times, even not lacking its clowns.

Another bit of biographical romance in connection with the old Welldon's Circus is the fact that when Mr. Brooks was there doing his acrobatic feats, there was a programme boy there who since those days has also been Mayor of Blackpool, as well as its Member of Parliament—Sir Albert Lindsay Parkinson—and has dealt mightily with much vaster programmes.

An event that sometimes occurs in connection with theatrical and entertainment ventures happened to the circus. The manager disappeared with the exchequer. The company, however, decided to keep the show on, and ran it so well that at the end of the season, when they divided up the profits, they found they had got a lot more than they would have had with their usual salaries.

There was another exciting incident in connection with that circus. Those were the days before the new Promenade hulking kept Father Neptune in check, the nights when the sea sometimes swept all over the " front " and up the streets, and one midnight a huge tide surged up past the station, and flooded the circus.

The horses were belly-deep in water, and the artistes had to swim after their property, the costumes of some being quite spoiled. Mr. Brooks' circus apparel, however, being hung on the trapeze, was well out of the wet.

After Blackpool, Mr. Brooks went to Rochdale, Accrington, Oldham, and other places, with one or other of the big circus proprietors, Henglers, Newsome, Ohmy, and toured the Continent. In 1887, then being romantically and happily married—to the young lady who nursed him after an accident—he became the landlord of the Adelphi Hotel, in Church Street.

END OF RAIKES HALL.

Reverting to Raikes Hall. It flourished till the eighteen-nineties, Mr. Charles Iddeson now being secretary and manager, with its new attractions, including the magnificently realistic "Niagara," designed and painted by that clever artist, Phillippotteaux. Blondin, the famous rope-walker, "Hero of Niagara," gave a performance on the high rope at the Raikes Hall, when he was over 70. Then the Tower attractions on the Promenade caught the crowd, and in 1899 Raikes Hall estate was sold for £80,000, and divided up into building plots. The next few years saw the transformation into streets and houses, only the hotel and bowling green being left. The Secondary School, the Jewish Synagogue, and the streets adjacent occupy the site of Raikes Hall Gardens. The little triangular park—beginning of Park Road—is where the entrance gates were (and where the old Blackpool Cycle Club used to meet). There were proposals to convert the Raikes Hall into a public park for Blackpool, but the price was deemed too high by a majority of the Town Council. The place would have made a fine park, and it was a pity to have the noble trees, where the rooks nested, cut down, as they had to be when building operations commenced, for Blackpool has never had so many trees that it could afford to throw any away.

THE WINTER GARDENS.

In August, 1875, the Winter Gardens Company was formed, and bought Dr. Cocker's house and 18,000 square yards of land for £28,000. In 1876 the Gardens were opened. The Victoria Hall entrance, looking to the sea, stands where stood Dr. Cocker's house, " Bank Hey " (the house was for a time enclosed in the Winter Gardens). Dr. Cocker was one of the principal directors, and was Chairman of the Company in 1881. He built a bungalow in Church Street, South Shore, and when that district began to get busy with buildings, he went to live in Bloomfield Road, but that house is now gone, too, on its site being a working-men's club.

The first part of the Winter Gardens to be completed was the open-air skating rink, in July, 1876, the entrance being in Leopold Grove.

On July 11th, 1878, the Grand Pavilion, built on plans by Thomas Mitchell, of Oldham, was opened. All the great musical directors of that day and after have been at the Grand Pavilion, the first being Alfred Cellier, composer of the comic opera, " Dorothy," followed by Van Biene, Riviere, De Jong, Risegari, Clarence C. Corri, Landon Ronald (now Sir), and others.

A Blackpool guide-book of 1883 has interesting advertisement pages about the Blackpool shows of that time. The Winter Gardens announcement, signed "W. Morgan, general manager" (the second manager —the one before him was Mr. Stevenson), states that the Gardens cost £107,000, and affords shelter for 20,000 persons. The orchestra " of thirty-six eminent instrumentalists " was conducted by Mons. Riviere, and the best theatrical and operatic companies, including Carl Rosa's and D'Oyly Carte's, were engaged for the season.

The next entertainment king, or in common parlance, manager of the Winter Gardens, following Mr. Morgan, was Mr. William Holland, familiarly and fondly known as " Bill " Holland, a gentleman of geniality, enterprise, and impressive rotundity. He

Church Street (looking seawards) in the seventies, from near St. John's Church.
To the left is the site of the present Empress Buildings and Winter Gardens

came from Scarborough to Blackpool in 1887 and reigned eight years (till his death in 1895). Under his jolly sway the Winter Gardens became famous. His motto was that its patrons should have the best; he would make the place magnificent even for day trippers (and Blackpool was crowded with 'em in those days). The tale that "Gus" (of the "Blackpool Gazette and Herald") tells about Bill Holland and the costly carpet has become a classic legend. He told someone he was going to pay a hundred guineas for a carpet for the pavilion. "What, spend a hundred guineas for a carpet for trippers to spit on!" exclaimed his friend. That gave Bill Holland a grand idea for booming the Gardens. He advertised, "Come to the Winter Gardens and spit on Bill Holland's 100-Guinea carpet."

And they came in their thousands.

But they didn't spit. Bill Holland was a wise man, and knew crowd psychology. Give the people good surroundings, and they'll behave up to 'em. Dress a man up, and he'll try to be a gentleman. George Harrop, one of our modern Blackpool managers, holds the same opinion.

In the season of 1887, Mr. Holland inaugurated those ballets which have developed to such splendour, and for which the Winter Gardens has become renowned, the first being entitled "Our Empire," written by Clement Scott (author of that fine recitation poem about "The Wreck of the Mexico"—1886), with music by Paul Valentine, Pauline Rivers being the principal danseuse. The idea of ballets, with the usual scanty attire associated with terpsichorean performances of that character, rather shocked some of the "unco guid" in Blackpool, including even some of the Gardens directors themselves, and protest was made at their introduction to the town, but time and tolerance have silenced the objectors, and now the majority of folks accept such stage displays of the female form as beautiful and artistic entertainment.

The magnificent Empress Ballroom, with the gorgeously decorated Indian Lounge (costing £128,881 14s. 7d.) was originated by Bill Holland, and opened in 1897, when the manager was Mr. Charles R. Brighten, who retired for health reasons. Its site was formerly the Skating Rink. Jack Cass, one of the old Blackpool Cycle Club racers, was one of the attendants and gave skating exhibitions. Jack is still with us; you may see him in the season with his public telescope, showing visitors the sea-views and mountains, on the Promenade at the bottom of Cocker Street. Previous to these developments the Skating Rink was transformed into a circus, Newsome's Circus, and for one or two seasons prior to the erection of the Empress Ballroom it was utilised for a novel form of entertainment known as "Noah's Ark," an agglomeration of performing animals, birds, and reptiles of all descriptions.

The Opera House, in connection with the Winter Gardens, was erected at a cost of £9,372 17s. 5d. (if you care to know the odd coppers), and was opened on June 10th, 1889, with D'Oyly Carte's Opera Company in Gilbert and Sullivan's "The Yeomen of the Guard."

In 1899, Mr. John R. Huddlestone, who had been secretary to the Gardens Company from 1880 to 1896, became manager of the Gardens, and still admirably occupies the post, with Mr. A. E. Peace as secretary, and Mr. W. T. Russell as acting manager of the Opera House.

It is interesting to note that in 1904 Charlie Chaplin, who has since become so famous in the film world, played at the Opera House in "Sherlock Holmes." The great tenor, Caruso, sang in the Winter Gardens Pavilion in August, 1909, at a fee approaching £1,000. Adelina Patti got £600 for a concert in the same pavilion. These items are mentioned as indicating the aim of the Winter Gardens' management to secure always the best artistes in the entertainment and concert world "regardless of expense," to quote the enterprising showman's usual announcement.

SUNDRY SHOWS.

Reverting again to the Blackpool Guide Book of 1883, already frequently referred to, we find that Professor Andre's Choir Concerts in the Alpine Hall have a full-page advertisement. The Alpine Hall is now Bannister's premises (near Central Station). Professor Andre's entertainments were generally of a semi-sacred character. He appealed largely to Sunday schools and churches for patronage, and gave his concerts a religious flavour. He also held " monstre gospel temperance meetings " every afternoon and evening, and organised excursions, with special privileges in regard to reduced price of admission to Blackpool places of entertainment, from the inland towns. He had concerts in the Indian Pavilion, North Pier, as well as in the Alpine Hall.

Read's Baths and Cocker Street Baths are also advertised in 1883. Cocker Street Baths now belongs to the Corporation. There is also the Prince of Wales Baths (next to the Lane Ends Hotel). By 1889 the Prince of Wales Baths had developed to popular water shows, " swimming entertainments daily," etc., under the management of Mr. W. H. Broadhead, who has since been Mayor of Blackpool and become the head of the Broadhead Theatres in Manchester and several Lancashire towns, as well as of the Morecambe Winter Gardens, and is happily still with us, as kindly and unassuming in the days of reaped success as in the days of beginnings and ventures. Mr. Broadhead once told me a tale of an applicant for free passes to the show—one of those persons of whom all theatrical and entertainment managers can tell amusing yarns of audacity, and the remarkable reasons they give as ground for a gratis seat. This particular aspirant for " deadhead " exemption from the pay-box blandly explained that he thought he was entitled to free admission because he and his wife and family were staying at the hotel next door. Mr. Broadhead not unnaturally concluded that a man who could afford to stay at the hotel, and who was, moreover, to judge

by his apparel and jewellery, and that of his wife who was with him, in a flourishing financial condition, could afford to pay as well as the working-class patrons who planked their money down cheerily and never dreamt of asking for free entertainment.

In 1877, Mr. Thomas Sergenson (afterwards Town Councillor) was running the Prince of Wales Theatre (belonging to the Lane Ends Company). In 1882, August, Sarah Bernhardt had a fiasco at Blackpool. She appeared at the Winter Gardens. The following letter of hers somewhat explains the affair: " I was suffering from a sore throat, and had no idea I was to play in a hall containing 15,000 persons, and open to all winds." Finding that the audience could not hear her, she stopped. " The managers told me to continue, as the people would be satisfied if they could only see me gesticulate. But," says the " Divine Sarah " superbly, " I am an artiste, not an exhibition," and concludes her letter, which was in the local papers, by saying she would have been all right in the Prince of Wales Theatre, as the public would have heard her there, even if less money had been made by the management. Mr. Sergenson shrewdly quoted this letter in his advertisements. In 1899 this theatre was demolished and the Alhambra (now Palace) put up in its place. The Alhambra was opened by George R. Sims (playwright, and " Dagonet " of the Referee "). It was eventually acquired by the Tower Company, re-christened the Palace, and with its ballroom, waxworks, and varieties, became one of the most popular places of entertainment in the town. Later, the ballroom on the ground floor, originally the Alhambra Circus, was transformed into the " Ideal " Skating Rink, and subsequently into the present magnificent Picture Theatre.

In 1894 Mr. Sergenson bought the site for the Grand Theatre, and the building was commenced, but shortly afterwards suspended, and Ohmy's Circus (" Ohmy," we are pleased to say, is still alive and resident in Blackpool), was established on the spot for a time. The Grand Theatre was completed in 1894 and opened on July 3rd of that year by Wilson

Barrett, with " Hamlet." In 1909 the Tower Company acquired the Grand Theatre at a price of £47,000, vastly improving it internally and externally.

The Theatre Royal (Assembly Rooms and now the Tivoli Pictures) was run in the seventies by J. Pitney Weston, who had a theatre in Bolton. It is surprising how often the laughable and lachrymose melodrama of " East Lynne " was put on at this theatre (and others) in those days. The managerial rule seemed to be when other plays failed to keep the box-office busy, " Try ' East Lynne,' " with its " sob-stuff," as the Yankees call it, and let the holiday-makers have their money's worth of sniffling and damp handkerchiefs.

We also note, in the old 1889 Blackpool Guide already referred to, advertisements of the Aquarium and Menagerie (now absorbed in the Tower Buildings), Palatine Hotel, Albion Hotel, Imperial Hydro, Foxhall " Harmonic Room and Billiard Room," No. 3 Hotel (concert room and billiards), and Derby Hotel.

Also the Belle Vue Hotel and Strawberry Gardens with " musical concerts " (did they sometimes then have concerts that could not be truly adjectived as musical?), dancing on open-air platform, tennis and croquet grounds; the " Oxford Pleasure Gardens," Oxford Hotel, Great Marton, with bowling green, described as a " pleasant drive from Blackpool or South Shore," and now the Marton tram-cars or the circular tour trams whisk you round it in a few minutes.

Horse " sharries " are also advertised in 1889 as " waggonettes to the rural villages of the Fylde," and to Fleetwood and Lytham, daily, by Uttley, Brown and Greenwood, from " Clifton Livery Stables," Church Street (where now the Clifton Picture Palace is). In those days Blackpool had almost as many livery stables as it has garages to-day.

Talking of the " rural villages," the 1883 Guide Book gives a picture of Hoo Hill Windmill, with part of its dome destroyed, and two of the sails gone. It was struck by lightning in a great thunderstorm in July, 1881, and was never used after that accident.

At that time Hoo Hill (now Westcliffe Drive) was a pleasant country district. The old windmill stood directly opposite the Windmill Hotel (still there), which has a little model of the windmill over its entrance porch. The first house on the right up the old Poulton Road from the inn was known as Bribery Hall, tradition saying that it was once given as the price of a vote at a Parliamentary election a hundred years ago. If that be true, the electors of those days got more out of their votes than their descendants ever do. Not only do we not get houses given us free, but Parliament won't even erect for rent the tenements promised at the general election.

TOWER GROUP OF ENTERTAINMENTS.

We next come to the evolution of Blackpool's most conspicuous group or agglomeration of amusements—the Tower Company's achievements and acquisitions. The Tower is Blackpool's landmark, visible for half-a-hundred miles round on clear days. From Pendle Hill, from Rivington Pike, from Holcombe Hill, from most of Lancashire's moorland heights, from the Pennine Hills between Lancashire and Yorkshire, from the Lake District, from the steamers going to the Isle of Man, from the mouth of the Mersey, from the Atlantic liners sailing in or out of Liverpool, you may behold Blackpool's sign in the heavens. Blackpool would certainly look very strange without its Tower. Yet, not thirty years ago, the Promenade lacked this great distinguishing feature.

The Blackpool Tower was suggested, of course, by the Paris Eiffel Tower, and Ald. John Bickerstaffe, the first Chairman of the Tower Company, and still famously filling that post, was the prime mover in the business. As already told, the Tower Buildings are on the site formerly occupied by the old Blackpool Aquarium and Menagerie, which was originally the mansion of Sir Benjamin Heywood, a banker, who came to Blackpool for health reasons in the early part of the nineteenth century. In 1866,

his successor, Sir Percival Heywood, sold the house and grounds to a Mr. Lowe (who built Lansdowne Crescent). Then Dr. W. H. Cocker (afterwards Blackpool's first Mayor) bought the property for £16,000, and eventually the place was transformed into the Aquarium, with public gardens and band, opened at Whitsuntide, 1874. Blackpool guide books of the eighties advertise " The Aquarium, Aviary and Menagerie, seals fed at 11 a.m. and 3-30 p.m., fishes fed at 11-30 a.m., and animals at 3 p.m. Selection by the splendid orchestrion, overtures, quadrilles, marches, and valses during the day, refreshments, bazaar and fancy goods.—J. H. Robinson, secretary."

The " splendid orchestrion "—and it well merits the description—is still in existence in the present Tower Aquarium—delighting those who love to listen to fine music while admiring finny grace in the great glass tanks of the grottoed serenity.

In 1880, the Aquarium, along with the Beach Hotel, was floated by Dr. Cocker and friends, under the title of the Blackpool Central Property Company, reconstructed in 1884 as the Central Promenade Estates Company, which paid £44,000 for the property.

In 1889 the concern was acquired by the Standard Debenture Corporation, Ltd., who formed the Blackpool Tower Company, which gave £65,000 for the property and land whereon the Tower was to be erected.

THE TOWER.

In all human constructions and inventions, as is the law of the universe, the Word (that is the expressed thought) precedes the World, or the Work. The Vision, the conception, naturally comes before the materialisation, the realisation, and between the dream and the achievement there is usually, particularly in mundane affairs, a period of struggle, anxiety, disappointments, voluntary or enforced alterations of plan and programme, and vicissitudes of many kinds.

It was so in the case of the Tower. The story of its genesis is not a tale of smooth sailing.

As already mentioned, a London syndicate, the Standard Debenture Corporation, got their eyes on Blackpool as a fine place for an Eiffel Tower, and in the year when Ald. John Bickerstaffe was Mayor (1889), they approached him and other leading local gentlemen, including Ald. John Grime, to enter into the promotion of the speculation. Out of this business eventually evolved the present Tower Company, with a few stormy scenes about the original founders' shares, which, it should be stated, were all wiped out, or consolidated with ordinary shares, to the satisfaction of all concerned, in October, 1908.

The Blackpool Tower Company was registered 19th February, 1891, to acquire the site and buildings (old Aquarium, Menagerie, Beach Hotel, etc.) for £94,000, but the directors got this figure reduced to £72,800, a great saving for the benefit of the shareholders. On September 29th, 1891, the foundation stone of the Tower Buildings was laid by the late Sir Matthew White Ridley, then M.P. for the Blackpool Division, who was afterwards raised to the peerage. Photographs of the event show many local notabilities, the Mayor (Ald. John Bickerstaffe) and Mayoress, Mayors of several of the chief towns of Lancashire and Yorkshire, and others, along with Sir Matthew W. Ridley in the reserved enclosure, outside of which is a big crowd of spectators. Thus began the erection of the magnificent pile that was to take nearly three years in building.

Ald. John Bickerstaffe, who had worked might and main, like a clever captain steering his beloved ship through storm and dangerous waters and saving it from wreck, was made the first chairman (and has held that position ever since), as was but his meed, for duty done and service splendid. The first secretary was Mr. George Harrop, the present manager, a good and faithful servant, and a gentleman to everybody, from the highest to the lowest, one of those rare men (would there were more) it is a treat to meet and know.

Many living Blackpool residents, as well as summer visitors, will have memories of the Tower in course of its erection. It was a perilous job for the workmen, and one man fell from near the top and was killed.

The Tower itself, to the top of the flagstaff, is 518 feet 9 inches high, and to the crow's nest 480 feet above sea-level. The Tower buildings cover an area of 6,000 square yards, and over 6,000,000 bricks were used. In the iron Tower itself, excluding the lifts, there are 2,493 tons of steel and 93 tons of cast-iron.

The Circus, as you may see if you visit it, is built between the four legs of the Tower.

The Tower was opened on Whit-Monday, May 14th, 1894. The Pavilion measures 120 feet by 102 feet, seating capacity 3,500, but will hold 6,000. The Circus is 110 feet square, and seats 3,000. The Elevator Hall (where the lift starts for the ascent of the Tower) just equals the Circus in area. So spacious are the Tower buildings that one August Bank Holiday 72,000 persons paid to go in the Tower and Circus.

In 1898 the Tower shareholders presented Ald. John Bickerstaffe with a silver model of the Tower—it may be seen in the entrance hall at the top of the steps. In that year Mr. Harrop was appointed general manager, and Mr. Robert Parker the secretary, and a model secretary he is, renowned for his grasp of detail and for having everything in such systematic order that he can get out an elaborate statement of the financial condition of affairs at about five minutes' notice.

If an historian may be permitted to muse for a moment, I can recall—like thousands, millions more—happy days at the Tower. There were jolly days at the Circus, when we took our youngsters to enjoy the clowning, and Herr Seeth's performing lions, and Lockhart's elephants, and the acrobats, and the Water Show (successor to Mr. Broadhead's Prince of Wales Baths' acquatic displays), the wonderful sight of the subsiding arena giving place to a great circular bath of water being quite a novelty in those days. Then there was the menagerie, and the aquarium, and the

ballroom, and in winter the Christmas tree, and the Sunday evening concerts, at which all the most famous singers in the world have appeared, and the splendid band selections.

I also remember the night the top of the Tower got on fire, blazing like a beacon in the heavens, July 22nd, 1897. That was the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria. Had the fire been a month earlier, it would have done for one of the celebrations. On the night of Jubilee Day, from the top of the Tower (specially open for the occasion), there was a view of the beacon fires in the Lake District and the Pennine Hills.

SANDS DIVERSIONS.

In the seventies of last century there were a great many gaps and open spaces in what is now the long continuous line of houses and shops along the Promenade from the Central Pier to the place where now is the Victoria Pier. Much of the front then was grass and sand, and small dunes. From the old vicarage, Promenade end of Station Road, to the Star Inn was all sandhills.

In the eighties and nineties there was considerable building. Yet in the early nineties, about 1891, there was a switchback railway close to the site now occupied by St. Chad's Terrace. When building began in that neighbourhood, the switchback was taken down and re-erected amid the sandhills, on part of the site where the Pleasure Beach afterwards developed. The gipsies from North Shore, following the crowd and its cash, for now Uncle Tom's and the Cliffs Fair around it were suffering from rival attractions, had also made a camp near the Star Inn, where they pursued their silver-palm trade in "futures."

Blackpool, of course, has always had a deal of outdoor entertainments. The seaside holiday-maker's big show, naturally, is, first of all, the sea and the sands, and the outdoor sights and diversions, including the crowd of which he is a unit, for man is a gregarious creature, and likes to take his pleasures multitudinously. Blackpool's first showmen of all, its

Blackpool Borough Coat-of-Arms.

primitive entertainers, had their stands on the sands, along with oyster-vendors, sweet sellers, etc., catering for the throngs on the beach.

Between Central and North Piers was the busy area, where thousands and thousands of folks, their children digging on the sands, sat on the sloping hulking, or on the beach when the tide was out, or gathered in large groups round the old popular pantomime of " Punch and Judy," or the ventriloquist on the top of a step-ladder, or the blind men with concertina or harmonium, or enjoyed themselves by having their corns extracted, or by buying prescriptions from the " quack " doctor who had all their little ailments off by heart, or by having their characters read, and their vanity tickled, by the gentry who stroked their skulls and read their " bumps " or made predictions from their palms.

Not all humbug, these " vagabond " arts and sciences, though many charlatans use them for scooping shekels, for test, the only honest method of sifting the false from the true, shows that there is much in phrenology, and even in palmistry and astrology, as must be the case if everything in nature—even lines on hands, configuration of heads, and arrangement of stars—has a meaning, as it must have if the world is the product of a Deity unto whose wisdom our highest human knowledge is as the ignorance of a child in its first days at school.

In the nineties the Ellis family, three of them, were a familiar feature of the sands. The progress of Mr. Albert Ellis is one of the several romances of our sands. He came to Blackpool penniless, and became Town Councillor, topping the poll for Brunswick Ward. He worked hard on the sands—from 6 a.m. to midnight in the season. In those days (1890-1900) the pitches on the sands were got by scramble, and often there was something like pitched battle for the best pitches. The competitors stood at the edge of the receding tide, ready to wade in and plant their stake as soon as the water got far enough back. Then the Corporation put an end to this strife, which sometimes resulted in bother and blows, by allocating the

various pitches, according to price paid. At the same time they refused to allow phrenologists, " quack " doctors, and rock auctioneers any more, so the Ellis family took a shop on Central Beach.

Yet another who graduated in the hard school of experience on the beach, by catering for that most exciting of all seaside diversions, donkey-riding, and ultimately won a seat among the " City Fathers "—which the jester would say was merely exchanging from one set of asses to another—was the late Mr. James Bamber, a homely and broad-minded " son of the people," who was for several years an honoured and useful representative of Foxhall Ward.

THE PLEASURE BEACH.

In 1894, the Promenade terminated at Victoria Pier (opened in 1893). There was a "nigger minstrel" troupe on the sands near Blower's Cafe (which is still there), also a photographic booth, phrenologists, Ellis family, Mr. Wm. Musgrove, and others, and J. Pye's ice-cream stall. Then came Old Dan's hobby horses and a skittle-alley, which were superseded by the hobby horses of the late Mr. J. Outhwaite, a quiet, kindly, and worthy man. A bicycle railway was next put up —the switchback was already there, as previously mentioned—by a London company, and these two elementary devices were the forerunners, the prophets in the wilderness, as it were, of all the modern developments which constitute the features of what our American friends call " Amusement Parks," of which the Pleasure Beach is the greatest and brightest example on this side of the Atlantic. It is interesting to note that to-day (1923), on the very site of the old primitive switchback, which cost £500, has been erected the latest triumph in that line, the " Big Dipper," at a cost of £25,000, just as in another sphere of entertainment the old twopenny picture shows have been transformed into the higher-priced cinema halls of to-day.

Thus began the development of the Pleasure Beach. Vision, enterprise, and speculation have added one by one to the novel attractions that have made the place such a holiday magnet for the multitude.

In 1910, when the Corporation, on sanitary grounds, ejected the gipsy camp from South Shore sands (on Valentine's Day, February 14th), the Pleasure Beach, Limited, was formed, the leading promoter being a man of experience, ideas, and schemes, working on a well-considered definite plan, and seeing far ahead. Behind all the various features of the Pleasure Beach is one root idea, and that idea contains the live seed of success. If aspirants to catering for public amusements want the tip, here it is: The secret is the same as the secret of the sea's attraction. Why does the ocean charm and lure more than the land, even more than other waters, such as lakes? The magic is in one word—motion. The holiday crowd wants something stirring, active pleasures, something to lift it up and down, whirl it round, toss it high and low, tickle it and thrill it with rapid sensations and constant change. In short, the multitude, in this respect the lowest minds curiously coinciding with the highest, seeks that baffling thing sought in vain through the ages by philosophic inventors, perpetual motion, and the nearer you can get to it in your devices to divert the people, and the surer you are of their pocket patronage. The motive, the theme, the key-note, that is the life and soul of the Pleasure Beach, and of profit to its proprietors, is motion, merry motion, in every conceivable shape and form.

FUNLAND BY THE FOAM.

Since 1909-10, the development of this Funland by the Foam has been tremendous. To-day, its joys and thrills include a Scenic Railway (1907—the first in Europe, as every special feature of the Pleasure Beach is the first of its kind in the Old World), River Caves, The Reel, Water Chute, Noah's Ark, the fine "Monitor and Merrimac" building, the Vel-

vet Coaster, Skating Rink, the Joy Wheel, House of Nonsense, and a hundred other diversions.

At the entrance to the Pleasure Beach is the magnificent Casino (1913), with its restaurant, cinema, and billiard hall, a White Palace by the sea. At night, when lit up with rows of lights, like strings of pearls, it gleams like a great white jewel, visible all the length of the Promenade, and is a beautiful sight. During the war the Casino, like the Victoria Pier, was used as a dining-room for some of the troops in training at Blackpool.

In the entertainment line, the Pleasure Beach is the most wonderful and romantic achievement in this Blackpool of wonders and romances. Other entertainment promoters had the soil prepared by predecessors, and, most of all, had the crowd there already, thrust upon them, and ready for any show. But the leading spirit of the Pleasure Beach had first to make his magnet and then get the crowd to it from the distance, and in spite of already admirable attractions under their nose as soon as they entered Blackpool.

And he has done it. A veritable magician with Napoleonic energy and strategy, to transform in twenty years, against obstacles of all kinds and opposition (for this is a world of competition and clashing interests), a stretch of waste sand into a popular entertainment centre, and make it one of the chief attractions of Blackpool, bringing the crowds to South Shore (incidentally very good business for the trams, which run to the Pleasure Beach in a queue during the season), greatly contributing to the development of the district, and, of course, not without its extremely profitable side to the gentleman with the wizard wand, whose rise is one of the romances of Blackpool's golden strand. One of those who started with the bicycle railway amid the sandhills about twenty-five years ago has long been a popular Town Councillor—he is a fine speaker, and one of the few Town Councillors with a wide reading and knowledge of literature, I once heard him discussing Ruskin—and might have been Mayor if he would.

BLACKPOOL'S GOLDEN STRAND.

I have spoken of the romances of Blackpool's golden strand. There are others besides that of the founder of the Pleasure Beach, others not as mighty, but still very interesting. Allusion has already been made to the rise of the Bickerstaffes, and to Ald. Broadhead, and others. In a smaller way there are many more. I have mentioned Mr. Pye, who used to sell ice-cream on the sands near the Victoria Pier. He came from Catshaw, a village in Wyresdale. He was a straight and conscientious man, and his ice-cream was excellent stuff that prospered him rapidly. He took a room on the Pier, then the Winter Gardens, and got his sons in the business with him (they still continue it). All out of a little handcart on the sands. The story of Cooper Bros. (the photographers) and the beginning of their rise with the father's cornet, playing and singing on the sands, has been told in previous chapters. Then there are the Peeny Bros.—long familiar on the sands with their ice-cream (ah! my brothers of the Journalists' Union, if it's money you want, ice-cream seems the game, doesn't it?), and no doubt many others with similar careers.

The bidding for the shore stands, let by the Corporation by auction, indicates their value, as much as £500 and over having been given for a single pitch for the season. In 1922 the sands pitches realised £4,549 10s. for the borough exchequer.

THE RISE OF THE CINEMA.

Reference has been made to other entertainment developments in the earlier chapters of this history. Many of them are of comparatively recent date.

But the Hippodrome, in Church Street, goes back a quarter of a century. Like some other places of amusement in the town, whose originators were unable to get a return for their investment, and had to let their projects go to other speculators for much less than cost price, thus sowing for others to reap,

the Hippodrome has had a chequered career. First it was the Blackpool Empire (a variety theatre), opened July 5th, 1895. On February 16th, 1897, it was sold for £24,500, much less than its original cost. Then it became the Hippodrome, and eventually was purchased by Councillor R. Fenton, who ran it as a variety show and pictures, till it was disposed of to the present company, with Mr. F. Harrison as manager. During the last few years the Hippodrome has been excellently improved internally, a fine cosy foyer being added in 1920.

The same company also run the Princess Picture House, on the Promenade, entirely re-built and refurnished, and now one of the most magnificent picture palaces in Britain. The new structure was opened July 10th, 1922.

Other fine cinemas are the Waterloo (opened December 9th, 1912), South Shore, the Tivoli, and the King Edward, all under the general management of Mr. J. Beck, who, very commendably, makes a feature of beautiful nature study films and the scenery of foreign countries; the Princess, the Imperial, the Clifton, the Casino, the Royal or Futurist (which developed out of the old Colisseum), and the Regent.

The Big Wheel, along with the Tower, is one of Blackpool's conspicuous features. It was put up by a company and opened August 22nd, 1896, but in recent years it became the property of the Winter Gardens Company. The weight of the Big Wheel is 1,000 tons, the axle alone weighing 36 tons, and its height, to the topmost girder, 220 feet, considerably less than half the height of the Tower, or, from sea-level, 260 feet. There are 30 cars, each to hold 30 passengers, on the Wheel.

PIER MUSIC.

Mention should be made of the pier concerts. Pre-eminent in its musical catering is the North Pier, of which Mr. James Walker has been the manager and secretary since 1895 (details of its origin and erection have been told in previous chapters). The beautiful

Indian Pavilion, erected in 1874, on a new north wing of the Pier (destroyed by fire September 11th, 1921, and re-erected 1923) has had the greatest vocalists and instrumentalists in the land delighting its holiday audiences—Sims Reeves, Madame Patti, Sir Charles and Lady Halle, Madame Antoinette Sterling, Mr. Ben Davies, Mr. Edward Lloyd, Mr. Andrew Black, Signor Foli, Madame Georgina Burns, Madame Kirby Lunn, Mr. Joseph Maas, Madame Edna Thornton, Dr. Brodsky, and many other artistes with famous names. Mr. Edward de Jong, the finest flautist of his time, was conductor in the early eighties, and was succeeded by Signor Risegari. In 1883, Professor Simon Speelman, the eminent viola player, became conductor, retaining the post till his death in March, 1920.

The North Pier is also renowned, in the season, for its Sunday morning Fine Feathers Parade (after church), when all the latest fashions, borne about by human bodies containing more or less soul, dazzle and entertain, and sometimes amuse the beholder. The greatest genius who ever visited Blackpool, Charles Dickens (in 1869) once walked on the North Pier.

Central Pier, the " popular " pier (manager, Mr. Cyril Chantler, who succeeded Robert Bickerstaffe, former lifeboat coxswain), has its bands, its dancing, and pierrots, as also has the Victoria Pier (manager, Mr. J. Roberts; the first manager being Mr. J. Worden), where the Sunday evening concerts are a delightful feature.

AMATEUR ENTERTAINERS.

Something should be said, in the way of tribute and appreciation, of Blackpool's amateur entertainers, whose performances are all for love and charity, and are given in the winter-time, when the holiday crowds are at home and Blackpool's own inhabitants are enjoying themselves with an incessant round of social functions, balls, whist drives, Sunday school parties, lectures, concerts, carnivals and amateur theatricals, making Blackpool's winter as

jolly as its summer—but for the residents this time, for then the shopkeepers and company-house keepers, who have had one continuous spell of hard work during the season, take their pleasure, and there is no question but that they know how to take it merrily.

The Blackpool Amateur Operatic Society was formed in 1901, at a meeting held at the house of Mrs. W. J. Read, South Shore, Mr. W. J. Read presiding. Ald. Jas. Howarth, then Mayor, was the first president, Mr. L. H. Franceys hon. treasurer, and Messrs. J. Smith and S. S. Wilson joint secretaries. On the committee was genial Sam Bancroft, J.P.—who, I believe, was sent to Blackpool long ago to die, given up by the doctors, but is still with us. The Society's first production was " The Mikado " (1902), followed by " Iolanthe " (1903), " Les Cloches de Corneville " (1904), " La Mascotte " (1905), " The Pirates of Penzance " (1906), " Merrie England " (1907), " Falka " (1908), " Utopia Limited " (1909), " Tom Jones " (1910), " San Toy " (1911), " Dorothy " (1912), " Miss Hook of Holland " (1913), " The Mousme " (1914), (1915, a war blank), " Princess Caprice " (1916), " Our Miss Gibbs " (1917), " La Poupee " (March, 1918), " The Marriage Market " (November, 1918), " My Lady Molly " and " The Cingalee " (1919), " Florodora " (1920), " The Dairymaids " (1921), and " The Lilac Domino " (1922). You may notice there are three of Gilbert and Sullivan's comic operas in that list. Mr. Clifford Higgin, himself a composer of high ability, was hon. conductor of the Society till 1914, when he emigrated to Canada. The Society showed its high esteem of him by a presentation.

One of the cleverest and most genial members of the Society, Mr. Reg. H. Robinson, fell in the war (he was a lieutenant), as also did the hon. treasurer, Mr. W. H. Sinnett, Lieut. A. Victor Smith, V.C., and Mr. W. Proctor. Thus does Bellona play tragedy with Momus, and the eyes that laughed with the players on the stage are touched with tears as they recall the heartbreak of the real and fatal drama in which these heroes perished.

During its score of years' existence the Amateur Operatic Society raised, to 1921, over £2,000 for charity, and in 1922 broke all its records by raising £1,000 to defray the cost of a new X-ray apparatus in Victoria Hospital.

The Blackpool Lyric Amateur Operatic Society, an offshoot from the Blackpool Amateur Operatic Society, began its stage career in 1906 with "The Geisha," followed by "A Country Girl" (1907), "Duchess of Dantzic" (1908), "The Toreador" (1909), "A Greek Slave" (1910), "King of Cadonia" (1911), "Veronique" (1912), "Amaris" (1913), "A Waltz Dream" (1914), "The Quaker Girl" (1915), "The Little Michus" (1916), "Gipsy Love" (1917), "Duchess of Dantzic" (1918), "The Dollar Princess" (1919), "Betty" (1920), "Tina" (1921), "Peggy" (1922), and "The Mikado" (February, 1923). This Society has raised £1,000 for local charities.

The Blackpool Amateur Dramatic Society, too, has done much for the local hospital, etc.

There is also the "Children's Annual Pantomime," produced by Mr. and Mrs. Fitzgerald, which has raised big sums for local charities.

SPORTS AND GAMES.

Football, that thoroughly British game, and the most popular entertainment in the world, for spectators, though mostly masculine, should not be omitted from an account of Blackpool's amusements, for, like many other towns, Blackpool has a football club of its own, with a ground at Bloomfield Road. The club was formed into a limited company in 1896. The players' colours are black and white.

Then there is the merry game of bowls, for which Blackpool has always catered excellently. In 1873 the father of the late Mr. John Nickson, of the Talbot Hotel, started the bowling handicap which has become famous as the Talbot Tournament At the first handi-

cap there were only 16 entrants. In 1922 there were 1,024, and would have been more had not the number been limited. The prize money totals £1,000 yearly. All the renowned bowlers of the country have figured in the Talbot Bowling Tournament.

In 1907 the Waterloo Handicap was inaugurated at the Waterloo Hotel. The competitors now number over 1,000.

The amateur bowling handicap of the British Crown Green Association, started in 1920 with the aid of Blackpool Corporation, has the biggest number of competitors, 2,300 in the first year, and 1,410 in 1922. The green is on Central Drive.

Then there is the Fylde District Amateur Bowling Association, as well as many clubs for billiards, golf (started in Blackpool by the late Mr. A. H. Doleman, schoolmaster, of South Shore, and a J.P.), tennis, cycling, swimming, and other sports and pastimes.

THE FREE SHOWS.

Father Neptune sometimes gives magnificent displays at Blackpool, to the delight of the visitors who happen to be there when there is a big tide with a bit of wind behind it, and think it fun to be splashed, or even drenched, by the huge waves leaping up the hulking and on to the Promenade. It is a beautiful sight when a great foaming mass of water is surging up the sea-wall and the sun is making little rainbows in the showers of spray dashing up and over the Promenade railings, while the white seagulls are hovering in the blue overhead.

Another free show is the sunsets, for which the Blackpool coast has ever been renowned. As everybody knows, or anyhow ought to know, Blackpool faces direct west, and is rich in sunset pageantries, feasts of colour that charm the eye and thrill the soul.

But the crowd has not yet evolved to artistic appreciation of the beauty and vision of sunsets, not to mention sunrises. They are the joy of the few.

Still less, I suppose, would the multitude see anything beautiful about the Blackpool Promenade on a wet night. Yet, looking up the length of the Promenade, from Victoria Pier northwards, the reflections of the gold and silver lamps on the asphalt, transformed into a fairy mirror by the rain, with the red tail-light of a motor-car gliding in the midst of the jewelled gleams, make a picture enthralling, marvellous, mystic, suggesting poetry, romance, enchantment.

Then there are the sands, the sea and the ships, and an occasional shrimper in his oilskins, and on his back his big long net, sticking out on either side from the shoulder, like wings.

To the quiet philosophic observer, the student of humanity, there is another free show at Blackpool in the season—the ever-varying crowd on the Promenade —no two units of it alike. It is a diverse crowd, almost cosmopolitan sometimes. You hear all the Northern dialects and Midland twangs. The faces of the folks, their ways, their manners, their speech, are full of interest. They are all generally jolly, in a holiday humour, breezy, free as the sea whose ozone they have come to inhale, and, as a rule, they are all wearing their Sunday clothes and on their best behaviour. I have seen very little objectionable rowdyism at Blackpool. The holiday-makers let themselves go in happy holiday spirit, a carnival carelessness, but they are decent, though maybe a trifle noisy at times. The Blackburn folks have the reputation of being the liveliest.

OLD GUIDE BOOKS.

Advertisements of places of amusement in the old Blackpool guides (1880-1890) show that the famous tenor, Sims Reeves was the star at Blackpool concerts, as well as Charles Halle, Santley, Senor Foli, Adelina Patti, Madam Patey, Carl Rosa's Opera Company, J. L. Toole, the comedian (1883), that Mr. Broadhead's " Prince of Wales Sea-Water Baths "

(on the site now occupied by the Palace), with its aquatic displays and comic events, was popular amongst the visitors, that Sarah Bernhardt was at the Winter Gardens Pavilion, Shiel Barry's " Cloches de Corneville " Company, and Charles Majilton's "Round the Clock," were amongst the attractions of the Winter Gardens (1883), and then the unique Gilbert and Sullivan's comic operas, and that in 1888 the Mayor (James Fish, J.P.) introduced a " Battle of Flowers " (after the style of the carnivals in the South of France) on the Promenade.

These old guides also show the tall-wheeled bicycle of the period—there's one on a picture of Shard Bridge—and the ladies' fashions of the time, notably the " bustle " that followed the crinoline. Samuel Laycock, the Lancashire poet, was a familiar figure—his friend Ben Brierley described him as " nobbut a bit of umbrella wire "—in those days at Blackpool, which he had long made his home, and in whose cemetery he is interred. Laycock wrote many verses about Blackpool and its sea and lifeboatmen.

Another literary character of this period was the Rev. William Binns, Unitarian minister, who, though aged, took great interest in educational matters and municipal progress. He was as unassuming as he was learned, splendid in giving the pith of any matter in a few illuminative phrases. It was a treat to hear him summarise a lecture or discussion.

Socialists, and others, with panaceas for purging the planet of all its ills, and creating the millennium while you waited, orated and argued on the sands in those days, and there are many yet alive who will remember Sansome, the indefatigable heckler and perpetual debater.

The nineteenth century closed with the Boer War (1899), during the course of which died Queen Victoria, who had an extra long reign of 62 years, her Jubilee being celebrated in 1887 and the Diamond Jubilee, 1897. The twentieth century opened with the successful invention of flying machines, man's conquest of the air, his greatest achievement for a thou-

sand years, by the Brothers Wright, of America, the beginning of picture theatres, and the rapid multiplication of motor-cars on the roads, so that to-day the people who anathematised the quiet bicycle as a terror of the highways and raiser of dust, now think nothing of jumping out of the way of an automobile rushing along at thirty or forty miles an hour, or of being half-smothered in the clouds of particles raised by motor-coaches or " sharries."

The 1901 census showed the greatest increase of population in Blackpool's history. From 1861 to 1871 the population just about doubled (from 3907 to 7092), as detailed in a previous chapter, and from 1891 to 1901 it much more than doubled, by 5,000, increasing from 21,970 to 47,348. During the next ten years to have doubled again it would have had to go up to 94,000, but it only increased by 11,000, the population in 1911 being 58,376. There is some doubt as to the exact figures of Blackpool's present population. The 1921 census gave it as 99,639. But as there was some question that that included visitors (it was taken June 19th), the Registrar-General revised the figure to 73,800, which is probably an under-estimate. There are 36,000 Parliamentary electors (male and female) in the borough. Reckoning an average of two children to each of these the population would certainly be nearer 100,000 than 73,800. The census shows that males and females (boys and girls) under 12 years of age are almost equal (7,464 and 7,547 respectively). But over 12 the figures are 34,645 males and 49,983 females. Of course, a great number of the females are domestic servants and waitresses. There are 96 fishermen, 694 males and 49 females in agricultural occupations, 2,144 male and 7 female metal-workers, 1,417 male and 53 female wood-workers, 3,744 male and 177 female transport workers, 1,308 male and 7 female builders, bricklayers, etc., 1,037 males and 485 females employed at entertainment places. 1,650 male and 1,137 female clerks, typists, etc., 773 male and 466 female makers of foods, drinks, etc., 481 male and 171 female paper workers, printers, etc., 219 male and 127 female brick and pottery makers, 320 male

and 117 female warehousemen, etc. Out of the population of 99,639 only 714 are given as of foreign birth —most being from Russia, 115, and 66 from Italy, 54 from France, 41 from Germany, 32 from Belgium, 28 from Switzerland, and a few from various other countries. No Jews are specifically mentioned, though there are many in Blackpool—they will be counted under one or other of the foreign nationalities.

Amongst other interesting matters, the 1921 census gives 84 teachers of music, 59 authors, editors and journalists, 40 artists, and 20 bookmakers (the more lucrative "bookmaking" connected with horse-racing and football).

XXIV.

THE TWENTIETH CENTURY.

Blackpool began the twentieth century happily and harmoniously with its first Musical Festival (1901), since grown to such famous dimensions (there are 8,000 entrants this year, 1923), Mr. L. H. Franceys being the first honorary secretary (for 21 years, till 1921, and still acting as honorary consulting secretary), Mr. G. W. Stansfield now holding that position, with Mr. Frank Howard as general secretary. The first Musical Festival (1901) was held in May, but it was decided that it would be a better time later in the year, and so it is now held annually in October. Mr. Granville Bantock (the composer), Mr. Cecil Sharp (the folk-song specialist), and other noted musicians, have been adjudicators. This year, too, the Marton tram track was laid, the first trial trip on this route being on 21st May, 1901, and the last of Blackpool's horse 'buses disappeared from the roads. The following year Blackpool got its first Board School, at Revoe.

In 1904, on the sands, where hitherto had been " Old Dan's " merry-go-round, skittles, and a few stalls, with, years previous, a jolly troupe of " nigger " minstrels at the then termination of the Promenade near Victoria Pier, the Pleasure Beach at South Shore began its wonderful development, and the first Labour and Socialist candidate, Arthur Laycock (son of the Lancashire poet) was returned to the Town Council, though on the " Independent " ticket. Old " Gipsy Sarah," of the South Shore Romany Camp, a dusky, wrinkled seeress, renowned amongst the lady visitors, died this year at a great age.

About this time there were rumours and tales of corruption in Blackpool's municipal affairs. It was alleged that certain Aldermen and their friends were taking advantage of Council position and knowledge to further personal interests. This kind of thing, though not much heeded unless it gets flagrant, is going on everywhere, more or less, though Blackpool has not been troubled with much of it. A Municipal

Reform Union was started by the Rev. H. Bodell Smith, Unitarian Minister, and Mr. William Grundy, a conscientious and courageous man who, independent of any party, fought for justice and reform for years. Eventually he triumphed over all opponents and was made a Councillor, dying in harness on Armistice Day (11th Nov.) 1921, at the age of 64, an honest man, an excellent citizen, and a faithful public representative. Dr. Hardman, a man who took an active interest in municipal matters, and others, became members, meetings were held, and the Council delinquents denounced by local gentlemen, aided by Mr. S. Norbury Williams, the exposer of some of Manchester's Corporation iniquities. A Municipal Reform candidate, John Smith, became one of the Blackpool Borough elective auditors, and got to work making revelations. He landed in a libel action, which resulted in a verdict against him, for though the conduct of the party libelled was hardly discreet for a man in a public position, it was not illegal, and John Smith's progressive friends had to come to his aid to prevent his household goods being "sold up." He deserved better fortune, for he was an honest man and a good citizen, doing what he considered was his duty to the town in which he was a ratepayer. The Municipal Reform Union did useful work in keeping a vigilant eye on the Town Council, whose members for the most part have been above suspicion and reaped no more than the legitimate reward of being a Councillor. In this age, with its general ideal of "getting on," few men do anything without it is to their personal interest, and so we cannot blame town councillors, even if they do sometimes use their position for their own ends, for practising the common code of commercial morality, though, of course, they all claim, on the election platform, that they are out for the public benefit and not their own. Yet one Councillor himself told me that he got elected for business reasons, and he said that all the others became councillors from the same motive. That is not true. I have known, and know to-day, town councillors who have loyally served, and are still serv-

ing, the town to their own business loss, not to mention time, gentlemen with a noble conception of civic responsibility, and doing right for right's sake, seeking no praise, fearing no blame, content with the quiet approval of conscience and the righteous satisfaction of doing their duty to their neighbours and fellowmen.

MUNICIPAL GROWTH.

For most of the following particulars about the municipal development of Blackpool I am indebted to a paper (published in pamphlet form), entitled "Blackpool and Some of its Municipal Works," by John S. Brodie, the Borough Engineer and Surveyor, June 13th, 1908, along with other papers and documents kept by Mr. D. L. Harbottle, the present Town Clerk, and his clerk and Mayoral Secretary, Mr. Arthur S. Wright, who has served the borough for over a generation, and is always genial and obliging, not only to scribes asking him to delve into dusty archives for the purposes of history, but to all citizens with whom he may have to deal.

Here, too, I would like to acknowledge my indebtedness to Mr. Alfred Lomax, lecturer and writer on Blackpool and Fylde geology and antiquarian matters, Mr. Rowland Hill, the Borough Librarian, Mr. J. Thornton (editorial staff of "Gazette and Herald") for information and service rendered while this history was going through the press, and to Messrs. Blane and Nickson, and others, who all have my heartiest thanks for loans of old records, documents, etc. Also, if it will not rouse the jealousy of other towns, I may point out that Blackpool, either owing to a kindly providence, or to a lucky intuition, has drawn considerably on natives of Bolton for its public officials. The late Town Clerk, Mr. T. Loftos (1883-1915), came from Bolton, as does the present Town Clerk (Mr. D. L. Harbottle, LL.B.). also the Borough Treasurer. Mr. Bateson, as well as the Vicar, and, significantly, if such a trifle may be mentioned in this connection, the writer of this history is a native of that town, too.

We have told the story of Blackpool's growth as a holiday place and the development of its catering and entertainment establishments. As the town grew, from a population of two or three hundred in 1801 (the total population of Layton-with-Warbreck, in which Blackpool village was then included, was only 473 at that date) to a population of 1,968 in 1841—a year after the railway line from Preston to Poulton was opened—the line from Poulton to Blackpool was not added till 1846—and a population of 2,564 in 1851, and as houses were erected and streets had to be made, the time came when a governing and administrative body was required, and on October 23rd, 1851, the first Local Government authority for the district was constituted, consisting of nine members, under the name of the Layton-with-Warbreck Local Board of Health. In 1871, the number of members of the Board of Health was increased to eighteen.

The first chairman of the Local Board was John Bonny (1851-1856), succeeded by James Simpson (1856-9), John Cocker (1859-60), Robert Rawcliffe (1860-64), John Metcalfe (1864-5), John Hardman (1865-69), William Henry Cocker (1869-73), and John Hardman (1873-76).

OLD ELECTION SQUIBS.

In the days of Blackpool's Local Board, there were some lively election contests, as a collection of Blackpool election handbills, and other old broadsheets (in the year 1868), pasted up in a big manuscript book, and lent me by a friend, amusingly shows. The adherents of the rival candidates, in their publications and squibs, were certainly less squeamish and far more personal than present-day politicians. If such jokes and skits were issued nowadays there would soon be libel actions. But in those days when they fought, they fought. They struck in every possible manner, and weren't particular how they scored so long as they did score. It was great fun, no doubt, for the electors, but contests thus conducted must have left many a sting, and caused breaches of acquaintanceship that never healed.

In 1868 the following "squib," parodying and satirising one of the candidates, was put forth (no printer's name):—

TO THE RATEPAYERS OF LAYTON-WITH-WARBRECK.

I have been childish since I have known you—I have gulled you from the year of my residence (1827). I love my glass and appreciate all who pay for it, and to test its qualities I would "dye" in honour of its luxuries. I love all who vote for me, and if you will only encourage me and the families I belong (also our nominee whose name was altered from our ancient one) we will go hand-in-hand to improve our properties.

Electors, never mind, although in reading this you may miss my usual grunt—I cannot help it, if it is piggish. I say if you will only elect the three of us we will dispense with that great eyesore and nuisance of a slade opposite our own property, and remove it to the North Shore at your expense. It will only cost £500 or £600 to do it, and I feel sure—knowing the great amount of good we have done to the town—that none of you would object to it.

Ratepayers, all of you give me a vote and I will look after your interests. I will get improvements done to your property, and those that don't support me I will take care that their property is not improved, except at their own expense.

"Work for me and I will work for you" is the motto of—Yours ever,

WILLIAM OF BLACKPOOL.

I believe the "William" referred to is William Thornber, one time Vicar of Blackpool, and its first notable historian, but no longer a clergyman at the time of that election, for other leaflets referring to the same contest mention Thornber, Banks, and Thornton as candidates on one side, and Brierley, Ormerod, Parnell, and Hayhurst on the other. Dr. Cocker—who some years afterwards became Blackpool's first Mayor—also figured in this contest, as another "squib" testifies. It was not a municipal election, for Blackpool did not become a borough till

later, but a fight for seats on the Local Board. At this time, remember, Blackpool had no big promenade, no Tower, no Winter Gardens, and only one pier (North), though the Central Pier was nearly completed, and opened a few months afterwards.

Another of the leaflets issued during this election throws light on the candidates and the questions before the public at that time. This other leaflet runs as follows:—

"An Attempt to Take From the Public One of Their Rights and Privileges for the Benefit of Certain Property-Owners. Ratepayers, Look Out!

"Now you are called upon once more to elect men who have the control of local affairs. Mind what you are about. Sift the selfish motives and movements of a well-known family party, who are already represented on the Board, but, not content with that, are attempting to get no fewer than three of their partisans returned at the present Election of Commissioners. Forty years ago efforts were made by the ancestors of this same party to stop up the ancient slade and highway near the Albion and Lane End Hotels. And what did the Blackpool people do then? Why, they smashed down the barriers and prevented the public being robbed of their rights and privileges. And now it is for you to "squelch" the attempt to get the trio—Thornber, Banks, and Thornton—returned to support a movement for the stoppage of the above-named public highway, which is to this day maintained by the town, at the expense of the ratepayers. Every interest in the town should be fairly represented, but surely one family ought to be content with one representative (which they have already on the Board), and not want to add three more of their supporters. Look at the qualifications and characters of two of them—Thornton and Thornber. Two bright and shining lights!

"A pretty pair certainly. Oh, Reverend William, stick to thy drinking and preaching, and retire into obscurity; and sneaking, selfish Edmund, don't think your hypocritical demeanour will enable you to deceive the people—they know you and your doings already.

You have been trying to dodge yourself into decent company; you want the people to believe that Mr. Parnell seeks to see you returned. Nothing of the kind. He is a respectable man, and, being so, of course will not countenance you. Edmund, thou art a deceitful lad in most things, but thy place, now, is not at the Board. Thy family doctor can see to thy family interests without thy assistance. Enjoy thyself, and don't bother thyself with public affairs. Thou wilt only dirty thy hands if thou does.

" Ratepayers, you have more than once before rejected Thornton, Banks, and Thornber. Reject them again. Vote for Brierley, Ormerod, Parnell, and Hayhurst, men of Experience, Intelligence and Independence. If you elect such men, then the Slade Question and all other questions will be properly dealt with, and while Improvements will not be neglected, economy and good management will be insisted upon in every department."

The " Slade Question "! Where is that great " Slade " question now? Where are the other burning topics of fifty years ago? Nay, where are those who fussed about them and discussed them? If some of those old citizens who got into such a fever about the " Slade " could only get out of their graves and behold the Promenade to-day, what would they say? As for the names of the candidates—Brierley, Thornton, Ormerod, Hayhurst, and the rest—who remembers them now? Who knows anything about those renowned men? Forgotten, vanished, like the " Slade " they made such a rumpus about. Fifty years ago those names were on all the tongues in the town. Now they are in oblivion. Verily, what a thing of foam is fame.

Let this be a hint of humility for us in our day. How trivial and valueless, if remembered at all, will seem many matters we deem great and important, while things we superficially deem small and insignificant will be treasured as the true and abiding features of our time. Imagine some student of Blackpool history going through the " Gazette and Herald " files in the year 2000 A.D. Can you guess the things

he will single out as vital, characteristic, the events, movements, names, that have made their mark in the evolution of the town and the story of the race? You would be astonished if you could see that future list.

One notes, even fifty years ago, the use of election cries with which we are well acquainted to-day. There's a familiar ring—an old, cracked ring—about some of the phrases.

In view of the blunt abuse in the leaflets I have quoted, it is amusing, in another sheet issued at the same time, to read the following, advocating "Thornber for Ever," and signed "A Lover of Right":—"None of us object to a little squibbing at these times of excitement; but I do object to scandal, personal abuse, mean insinuations, and falsehoods." After which the writer declares that Thornber, who had already been on the Board some years, "is a tried man, and has never disgraced his position as representative nor betrayed his trust," and concludes that "the betting is 2 to 1 that Thornber is first man at the winning post."

I am not a betting man myself, but, judging from the style, I dare wager my boots to a bootlace that "A Lover of Right" was Thornber himself.

BLACKPOOL BECOMES A BOROUGH.

In 1876 Blackpool got a charter of incorporation and became a borough, (as detailed in a previous chapter), the succession of Mayors being as follows:—

William Henry Cocker (1876-9, also 1884-87).
Francis Parnell (1879-1880, January 28th).
Thomas McNaughtan (1880, also 1885-6).
Henry Hall (1880-1883).
John Hardman (1883-4).
James Fish (1887-89).
John Bickerstaffe (1889-91).
Henry Buckley (1891-2).
James Cardwell (1892-4, also 1896).
Fred Parkinson (1894-5 and part of 1895-6).
James Ward (1896-7).
Robert B. Mather (1897-8).
Joseph Heap (1898-9).

George C. Kingsbury (1899-1900).
T. H. Smith (1900-1901).
James Howarth (1901-2).
James Heyes (1902-3).
Gilbert Blundell (1903-4).
Joseph Brodie (1904-5).
William Hy. Broadhead (1905-6, also 1910-11).
Samuel Hill (1906-7).
James Battersby (1907-8).
Thomas Fielding (1908-10).
John Collins (1911-12).
Milton G. Wilde (1912-13).
James Dewhurst (1913-14).
William Cartledge (1914-15).
Richard Holt (1915-16).
A. Lindsay Parkinson—since knighted—(1916-19).
Eli H. Howe (1919-20).
Charles Wm. Callis (1920-21).
David Dickinson (1921-22).
Henry Brooks (1922-23).

In 1898 the Town Council was enlarged from eighteen Councillors and six Aldermen to thirty-six Councillors and twelve Aldermen, and in 1904 (October 1st) Blackpool became a County Borough. In 1917, under the Blackpool Improvement Act, Bispham was incorporated and a new Ward created, with three Councillors and one Alderman.

As you will see, from the above list, Blackpool has had 33 Mayors from its incorporation to this year (1923), and during the last twenty years a salary or honorarium of £1,000 has been attached to the office, though not all the Mayors have taken it. Of most of them there is little to chronicle. Some few were progressive, intellectual, one or two caused great wonder as to how they came to be selected for Chief Citizen (money and influence give the clue to the mystery), while the rest, mayoral mediocrities, were mostly put in power by political party. As in most boroughs where £ s. d. is the trinity really worshipped amidst a pretence of Christianity, money usually makes the Mayor. There is no need to lift

the majority of Blackpool Mayors out of an oblivion excellently earned. Four or five adorned the office, two or three added no credit to it, while the majority merely filled it.

FREEMEN AND M.P.'S.

The honour of the Freedom of the Borough has been conferred on the following:—

Coun. Wm. Henry Cocker (1897, died 1911).
Ald. Joseph Heap, J.P. (1907).
Ald. John Bickerstaffe, J.P. (1912).
Ald. J. Fish, J.P. (1912, died 1913).
Ald. Jas. Ward, J.P. (1914, died 1920).
Ald. R. B. Mather, J.P. (1914).
Ald. John Grime, J.P. (1915, died 1917).
Ald. James Heyes, J.P. (1915, died 1918).
Brig.-Gen. T. E. Topping, D.S.O. (1922).
Rt. Hon. David Lloyd George, M.P. and Prime Minister (Aug. 6th, 1918), but did not come to receive the honour personally till Oct. 14th, 1922, when, at a crowded meeting in the Tower Ballroom, he was presented with the "freedom" by Mayor Dickinson and a platform full of the town's representatives and leading citizens.

Under the Redistribution of Seats Act, 1885, Blackpool became a separate Parliamentary Division, including Bispham, Fleetwood, Freckleton, Kirkham, Lytham, Warton, Marton, Poulton (and Carleton), Hardhorn, St. Annes, Singleton, Thornton, Weeton, Broughton, Fulwood, Farrington, Penwortham, Woodplumpton, and several other smaller districts, and from 1885 to 1910 was represented in Parliament by the following:—

1885—Col. Sir. Fredk. Stanley.
1886—Sir Matthew White Ridley, Conservative (defeated Mr. J. O. Pilkington, Liberal).
1892—Sir Matthew W. Ridley (defeated Mr. T. Walker, Lib.).

1895—Sir Matthew W. Ridley, unopposed. Later Home Secretary, and subsequently elevated to the peerage.
1900—Mr. H. Worsley Taylor, C. (defeated Ald. J. Heap, L., by 1,470 votes).
1906—Col. W. W. Ashley, C. (defeated Mr. V. Phillips, L., by 3,061).
1910—(January) Col. W. W. Ashley (defeated Mr. S. Hodgkinson, L., by 3,624).
1910—(December) Col. Ashley, unopposed.

In 1918, at the end of the war, another redistribution of seats made Blackpool, Lytham, and St. Annes one Parliamentary constituency, with a total of 46,292 electors (Fleetwood, Poulton, Kirkham, Singleton, etc., becoming the Fylde Division), and since then Blackpool's Parliamentary representation has been as follows:—

1918—Sir A. Lindsay Parkinson, Coalition Unionist, 15,818 votes (defeated Mr. C. F. Critchley, Progressive Coalition, 9,862 votes, and Mr. A. Gee, Labour, 2,608 votes), majority 5,956.
1922—Major L. G. S. Molloy, Conservative, 18,206 votes (defeated Lt.-Col. H. M. Meyler, Liberal, 18,040 votes), majority 166.

In 1881 the rateable value of Blackpool was £104,709; in 1891, £178,377; in 1901, £427,938; and to-day (1923) it is £880,759. (These figures are from the Blackpool "Gazette and Herald" Year Book, a publication which gives a vast amount of details concerning municipal and other matters). Blackpool is one of the lowest-rated towns in the country.

PROMENADE EXTENSIONS.

Hutton, the first man to write an historical description of Blackpool, in 1778, says: "One of the leading amusements at Blackpool is to ride or walk, another is to figure on the Parade, . . a pretty grass walk on the verge of the sea, divided from the road with white railing. It is perhaps 6 yards broad and 200 yards long, with an alcove at one end only (bottom of Church Street), but at the other a wide

pond or pit (about Hounds Hill). This parade is capable, by Art improving Nature, of being made one of the most beautiful walks on the island. It might easily be extended to a mile, in a straight line, with an alcove at each end."

If Mr. Hutton could view Blackpool Promenade now, he would be delighted to see that it has fulfilled his prophetic vision, and thrice as much. His modest dream of a mile parade is now a three-mile Promenade, and still extending.

In 1828 the old grass-walk was transformed into a gravel promenade, and in 1856 it was extended to Bailey's Hotel (now the Hotel Metropole). (For details of extensions from 1860 to 1893 see Chapter XXI.)

In 1893, by another special Act of Parliament, the Corporation got power to construct new promenade and sea-defence works from Carlton Terrace to the Gynn, and this difficult engineering work was carried out under the supervision of Mr. J. Wolstenholme, then Borough Surveyor, at a cost of £144,716, and completed and opened in 1899.

In that year, as the old 1865-70 Promenade was found inadequate for the increasing visitors, it was decided to widen that part of the Promenade seaward by 60 feet. Later, however, Mr. John S. Brodie, then Borough Surveyor (September, 1900), sagaciously suggested that the increased widening should be 100 feet (instead of 60 feet), and after Parliamentary sanction had been obtained, the work was commenced at South Shore end in June, 1903 (one short length, 60 feet wide, from Victoria Pier to Pleasure Beach, had already been done, in 1900, at a cost of £6,038).

ROYAL VISITS.

The new wide Promenade (as already told in a previous chapter) was completed from Victoria Pier to North Pier (Talbot Square), a distance of 3,184 yards, at a cost of £304,000, on July 25th, 1905.

The Princess Parade, from the North Pier to Cocker Street, costing £52,000, was opened May 1st, 1912, by Her Royal Highness Princess Louise, in the

mayoralty of genial Ald. John Collins, with the usual royal reception, procession, and banquet.

Apropos royal visits to Blackpool, on July 8th, 1913, King George and Queen Mary visited the town, had a right royal greeting, and, of course, drove along the Promenade. There was, I believe, some jealous disappointment (which found expression in the local press), more or less inevitable on these occasions, of certain leading or public men who were not included in the list of those to be introduced to their Gracious Majesties and bask in the royal limelight. One sympathises with these poor souls, for it certainly must be a galling thing not to be able to hand down to your descendants the proud fact of having shaken hands with royalty. On July 8th, 1921, the Prince of Wales visited the town, this event also being the occasion of mayoral receptions and public festivities. This year (1923) the Promenade is being still further extended at both ends, with magnificent open-air baths at South Shore and North Shore.

What has the Promenade cost since the great developments began in 1865?

Taking the figures given in the preceding items we get a total of £594,754. A vast amount. But the grand Promenade is well worth it.

THE TOWN HALL.

The Town Hall, built on the site of Wright's confectionery shop and dining-rooms (with a wine licence), was commenced in 1895 and completed in 1900, at a cost of £81,500. The Council Chamber walls are adorned with pictures of events in Lancashire history, and the hall adjoining with oil portraits or photographs of the succession of Mayors. On coloured windows, half-way up the great front staircase, are representations of some of the coats-of-arms of other Lancashire boroughs—Preston, Bolton, Bury, Oldham, etc.

Blackpool's coat-of-arms is thus described by the heraldic experts:—"Heraldic Blazon—Barry wave of light sable and or, a seagull volant proper, on a chief argent, a thunderbolt also proper, between a fleur-de-lys and a lion rampant both gules, and for the crest

on a wreath of the colours on a battlement of a tower, with the sails of a windmill saltirewise proper, surmounted in the centre by a rose gules barbed and seeded also proper."

But this is what it looks like to a simple scribe unlearned in heraldry, beginning at the top—top of all—in the middle, four windmill sails, in the shape of the letter X, with a red rose in the centre (or axle), the windmill sails showing that Blackpool is in a breezy " Windmill Land." The windmill sails are set on the top of a battlemented tower, with decorative crests on either side. Beneath that is a visor or knight's helmet, and under that a three-leaved flower (fleur-de-lys), along with what the heraldic people term a thunderbolt (though I should never have guessed it), and on the other side of that a lion on its hind-legs, with its forepaws in the air, as if in a sparring contest —these last three objects all being in a line. The flower and the lion are said to have figured in the arms of the Banks and Cocker families—Mr. Hy. Banks and Dr. Cocker being Blackpool pioneers. Under this are wavy bars of black and gold—" sable " is French for black and " or " for gold—representing sea and sands (but why black for the sea—why not blue?—or is the black significant of " black " pool?), with a flying seagull (that is the " seagull volant "), and beneath that, right at the bottom, the motto " Progress." Blackpool did well in taking that rather abused word. For " Progress " is the word of God, the motto of our universe.

WATER, GAS, ELECTRICITY.

Blackpool's water supply is not in the hands of the Corporation, but of the Fylde Water Board, though seven of the fifteen members are nominated by the Blackpool Corporation, and the remaining eight by Fleetwood, Lytham and St. Annes. Ald. John Bickerstaffe is Chairman of the Board. Originally owned by the Fylde Water Company, the Fylde Water Works were opened in 1865, with a reservoir at Weeton. The present Fylde Water Board acquired the works in 1899.

The new Grizedale Reservoir, just completed, is 49½ feet deep, and will hold about 284,000,000 gallons. In 1910 and 1912 the Board obtained Parliamentary powers to construct extensive new works, but the war (1914-1918) held that scheme up. Now, however, the project is being proceeded with, in the Hodder Valley, amid the moorlands east of Grizedale.

Blackpool did not get gas till February, 1852, when a few of its shops were lit by that illuminant (London first used it in 1807), supplied by a local company. The Gas Works were purchased by the Blackpool Local Board in 1861. There are 90 miles of gas mains in the borough.

The Gas Works have always been a most profitable undertaking, under the excellent management of the Chews—John Chew and William Chew, father and son. John Chew was an indefatigable servant of the borough. The Gas Works was his life. But he took a keen interest in every phase of Blackpool's municipal development and the duties of citizenship.

From 1861 to 1908 the total profits of the Gas Works amounted to £257,700. For last year (1922) they were £28,582.

For the same year the Electricity Department showed a profit of £27,707.

The Electricity Works was opened in 1893 by Lord Kelvin, then President of the Royal Society. and have been frequently extended and brought up to date. So recently as this year (September, 1923) the ninth extension was completed, and opened by the Mayor (Councillor Harry Brooks). Blackpool's Electricity Works rank as one of the finest in the kingdom.

MISCELLANEOUS MUNICIPAL MATTERS.

Blackpool Sanatorium, New Road, was erected in 1891 at a cost of £8,375.

The Police Courts, South King Street, were built in 1892, at a cost of £20,560. The first Police Station (in the 1850's) was in Bonny Street, and then in Lytham Street.

There are 145 licensed houses (hotels, inns, etc) in the borough.

Blackpool has 20 representatives on the Fylde Union. The Workhouse is situated at Kirkham.

The Fire Brigade Station, 1900, cost £9,288.

The Wholesale Fruit and Vegetable Market, formerly a mere open space, was roofed over in 1854.

The Cemetery was first laid out in 1872. In 1899 and 1905 further acreage was acquired.

Lytham Road Bridge, over the railway at South Shore, was rebuilt in 1906, at a cost of £8,000. The original bridge was put up in 1862-3.

One of Blackpool's deficiencies is trees, but the Corporation have during the last twenty years gone in for open spaces and tree-planting. It is found that maple and the common sycamore and Scotch elm grow best in Blackpool. The willow-tree flourishes on our coast, too. It bends to the gales, mostly westerly, as those will know who have noticed how all the trees about Blackpool lean away from the sea.

A small matter, but very serviceable, and showing a care for public rights, is the erection of signs, by the Blackpool Corporation (on the suggestion of the Ramble Club), pointing out " public footpaths," which landlords of the mean type are always seeking to annex. As far back as 1855 I find in the " Preston Pilot " an account of a Marton man who tried to close an old footpath and who said, " Th' public's no more reet o' way through it than through my stomach." One regrets to say there are a few of that stamp of farmer still left. They would not let the men who fought for England in the Great War have a walk in our English fields if they could help it. While respecting the rights of landlords, and deploring the vandalism of some townsfolk when in the country, the rights of the public must be maintained, especially in these days, when, owing to the spread of towns, the field-paths are being more and more encroached upon by the builder.

SPLENDID TRAM RIDES.

The development of Blackpool's tramway system, whose takings are an index of the growth of the town and its summer patronage—in 1893 the receipts were £2,361 from 355,512 passengers, in 1903 £42,580 from

6,169,121 passengers, and in 1913 £74,166 from 12,452,820 passengers, 35 times as many in 20 years—has been detailed in previous chapters. The tramway profits in 1922 were £33,369 (£3,000 more than in 1918).

The three-mile tram ride along the front, the whole length of the Promenade, with the views of shore and sea, the three piers, the Welsh hills and Lake District hills over the water, the holiday throngs like swarms of bees sauntering along the broad esplanades or gathered round the "Punch and Judy" show and other entertainers on the beach, or reclining in deck-chairs or on the sands, where the youngsters are frolicking with holiday bucket and spade, all in the most exhilarating ozony air, is one of Blackpool's most picturesque, diverting, and joyous features.

Then there are the tram lines that link the other Fylde coast towns to Blackpool.

The Blackpool-Lytham tramroad, through St. Annes, where the first houses were built in 1875, started by a company under the management of Mr. Lewis Slattery, who was succeeded by Mr. H. W. Laing, was opened July 11th, 1896, with a system of gas traction, which, as it was not satisfactory—sometimes there were comic episodes of the passengers having to get out and help to push the cars up the inclines over the railway bridges at South Shore and Stoney Hill—was converted into the overhead electric system in 1903. In 1920 the St. Annes Council—now the new borough of Lytham-St. Annes, 1922—purchased this nine miles of tramway, which, of course, has opened up and developed the districts along its route, and gives a delightful sea-coast ride, with inland views of distant windmills (Little Marton and Weeton), from Blackpool and South Shore, past Squire's Gate (the old aviation ground and racecourse, and now Convalescent Camp), over Stoney Hill Bridge and along the sand dunes to St. Annes, with its gardens, Fairhaven (Ansdell, with its marine boating lake), and Lytham's sylvan charms.

The Blackpool-Fleetwood tramroad, or light railway, started by a company, opened July 13th, 1898,

under the management of Mr. John Cameron, has developed the districts along its ten-mile route, as well as affording a grand sea-coast ride, views of grassy cliffs and sea, inland villages, churches, windmills (Thornton, and, over the River Wyre, Preesall in the far distance), and Rossall College, and the lighthouse and shipping at Fleetwood. In 1919 this tramroad was purchased by the Blackpool Corporation.

It is somewhat curious—indicating that while many men were fighting and dying in battle abroad, pleasuring was going on merrily at home—but even during the Great War, after the first year of hostilities, the Corporation tramway receipts and number of passengers increased, except one year, 1915 The war began in August, 1914, and the figures are as follows:—

1914—£84,797 from 14,289,802 passengers.
1915—£76,105 from 13,624,514 passengers.
1916—£80,060 from 14,585,851 passengers.
1917—£96,224 from 17,810,538 passengers.

In 1918 the trams showed a record profit of £30,307 (of course, the fares had been increased during the war), but this was beaten in 1922 by a profit of £33,369 (which certainly ought to go to a large extent in reduction of fares).

Part of the explanation of this money-spending in pleasure lies in the fact that the munition-workers and other artisans at home (exempt from the fighting and paid well) were drawing big money and squandering it. I saw many cases, typical of thousands. In one instance three girls and three exempted men spent £3 in ice-cream (6d. a glass) at one sitting, while another two girls spent £1 in chocolates in one morning. Another contributing factor to this extravagance was that shopkeepers of all sorts were " profiteering " and a " new-rich " class (and incidentally a " new poor," composed of middle-class people hit by the war) had come into existence.

OPENING THE GREAT PROMENADE.

In 1905 (Tuesday, 25th July), with great festivities for a week, including motor-speed trials, with

mayors and their wives from boroughs all over England, with bands and processions, one of over 5,000 school children, and a banquet in the evening to the mayors and other guests, at the Hotel Metropole, which a hundred years before, as Bailey's Hotel, had stood on the little white-railinged green path now developed to such a grand parade, our great new Promenade, from the North Pier southwards, was opened, widened to its present breadth and extended to its present length, a magnificent piece of work, the outcome of the vision and courage of the Borough Surveyor, Mr. J. S. Brodie. In 1899, following the construction of the North Parades and Lower Walk, costing £150,000, and opened in 1897 (Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee), a 60-feet widening of the Promenade from the North Pier to Victoria Pier was sanctioned by Parliament, but Mr. Brodie, looking wisely to the future, foresaw that 60 feet would not be enough, and advocated a widening of a hundred feet. The proposal was condemned as crazy by those people who cannot see beyond the end of their noses—we have some of them in every generation, even Thornber in 1837 speaks of those who in his time opposed plans to make the little town more attractive for visitors and better for residents—but the Borough Engineer stuck to his idea, with faith in himself to carry out the gigantic undertaking, and the result has justified his dream, fulfilled his confidence, and proved his ability.

The work took three years, during which time the old-fashioned hulking was replaced by a massive concave bull-nosed wall. Seven hundred men were employed, and the cost was £350,000. Huge quantities of sand were removed from the south end of the shore to the north by trains running on specially-laid lines on the beach and on "the front," and the "Sands Express" was a novelty that provided spectacle and entertainment for the residents during the quiet weeks of winter, and figured on picture postcards (another twentieth century feature in which Blackpool does an enormous business for the benefit of the G.P.O. revenue, during the "season"). By the

hundred feet widening a total of 22 acres of shore was reclaimed from the sea. Thirty-five flights of steps were made down to the sands, six slades for boats and bathing-vans, and 22 kiosks (each seating 18 persons, though, frequently, in that happy economy practised by lovers, one may see two persons occupying one seat). The Promenade is 4,804 yards, or 2¾ miles, in length, from the Gynn at North Shore to the tram terminus at South Shore.

In 1904 Blackpool was made a County Borough, and the Revoe Gymnasium was opened.

In 1906 Blackpool got its first picture theatre in the old Colisseum (run by Mr. A. Blacker), the place where had been exhibited the gigantic circular scenic picture (painted by an eminent French panoramic artist, named Phillipoteaux, which had originally been exhibited at the Royal Palace Gardens, otherwise the Raikes Hall estate), with a stage setting of huts and paths and bridges for the spectators, of Niagara Falls. It was but a primitive place, heated by coke stoves, on which the audience roasted chestnuts in the winter, and I wager that the youngsters who got excited over the "Wild West" films—no Charlie Chaplin as yet on the scene, nor Mary Pickford—and sucked the sweets given on Saturday afternoons by the management (all for one penny), enjoyed the entertainment as much as any show in the splendid and cosy picture theatres of to-day.

Steamboat excursions are popular amongst holiday-makers, and Blackpool, a capital centre for short sea-trips, had made a feature of these healthy water-trips for years, as well as of "hour's sails" in the yachts and row-boats of the fishermen. Blackpool's first steamboat was the "Wellington," 1871, followed by the "Bickerstaffe," 1879. In 1895 these two steamers were supplemented by two fine swift new cross-channel boats, "The Queen of the North" (Blackpool Steamship Co., Central Pier) and "The Greyhound" (owned by the North Pier Steamship Co.), both capable of doing the sail from Blackpool to Douglas, 61 miles, in three hours. There was keen

The "Sands Express."

Used for hauling wagons of sand from the beach at South Shore, for "filling up" the new Promenade during the widening in 1904.

(Photo. J. M. Tomlinson, Poulton-le-Fylde.)

WOOLWICH
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LIBRARIES.

rivalry and much racing between the two vessels for a while, but eventually the separate companies merged into one. "The Queen of the North" (taken for Government service during the war, and sunk in the Mediterranean) was 220 feet long, beam 26 feet, and depth 12 feet. The "Greyhound" (sold to a Belfast firm) is 230 feet long, beam 27 feet, depth 16¼ feet.

It is worth noting that, owing to the seaworthiness of the boats and seamanship of the captains and crews, there has never been any loss, nor any serious accident, in connection with the Blackpool steamers, though sometimes sudden storms arise which make our waters tempestuously perilous, and there be many Blackpool visitors who can tell tales of thrilling passages out of the mouth of the Mersey, or from Douglas when the sea has been so stormy that the steamers could not land at the pier but had to make for Fleetwood harbour, ten miles distant. But there are many serener memories. One recalls trips o'er tranquil summer seas to Douglas or Llandudno and Menai Straits, chatting with Captain Harry ("Queen of the North") or Captain Seed ("Greyhound"), lounging and reading in the sunshine and ozone, or enjoying the talk and music and concerts and the scenery along the coast.

Perhaps it had better be mentioned here—the information may come in useful for some of us—that in 1907 the new Fylde Workhouse at Kirkham was opened. I have not yet sampled it—but, perhaps with other poor scribes and impecunious persons of all sorts, I am looking forward—but I may say for the consolation of all whom it may hereafter concern (though heaven forbid that it should ever be your luck), that I am assured by sundry Guardians and others who know, that it is one of the best workhouses in all the kingdom, up to date in every way, with baths, pianos, and other comforts and luxuries.

FIRST BRITISH FLYING MEETING.

Blackpool has been a pioneer in many things. In 1909 (Monday, October 18th) it did its best to encourage the young art of man-flying. The Corporation

promoted a great Aviation Week, at Squire's Gate, and the eyes of all the world, fascinated by the marvellous new invention, were on Blackpool. It was not exactly the first aviation meeting ever held in the British Isles, though very near it, for Doncaster, having got wind of Blackpool's scheme and trying to forestall it, had started one on the previous Friday, October 15th, though nothing like on the Blackpool scale.

Perhaps in this aviation affair Blackpool had an eye to business as well as to the encouragement of aerial evolution, for it is all there, alert and A1, when there is good advertisement to be achieved. But that is quite legitimate enterprise, and to its credit, that spirit which has lifted the town to the top and keeps it there. Anyhow, with its Aviation Week, Blackpool wrote its name in the skies as well as over the earth.

Great crowds flocked to Blackpool to see the spectacle. There was not much flying, though, because of the wind and the danger, and the people who paid the admission fee to the enclosure, where pylons marked the track, and the strange wheel-footed sky-machines were roosting in the hangars of the big aerodrome, and the crowds who stood on the adjacent sand-hills in hope of a free exhibition, were greatly disappointed during the several days when aviation should have been proceeding in the hands of all the famous airmen of the time, who had come to Blackpool, including Latham, Paulhan, Fournier, Rougier, and A. V. Roe, and other "bird-men," competing for prizes ranging from £50 to £2,000. The greatest speed in these flights was about 36 miles (average)—compare that with the speed of over 100 miles to-day. But the following year, though the weather was not very favourable, there was some fine flying, under the auspices of the Lancashire Aero Club, from July 28th to August 20th (1910).

Nowadays, the elaborated aeroplanes, with their marvellously improved engines, can tackle a gale without fear of disaster, but twelve years ago the meteorological conditions had to be very obliging before the aviators would venture aloft with their uncertain

machines. Yet in spite of the adverse elements, great things were done, and records broken (and, luckily, no heads with 'em) by Tetard, Grahame White, Loraine, the actor aviator, McArdle, Harding, Grace, Drexel, Chavez, and others.

There were passenger trips at £5 a time.

The famous Farman evoked cheering enthusiasm by braving a fierce wind and flying in it for half-an-hour. On the Sunday, July 31st, Grahame White alighted on the sands near Victoria Pier, opposite the Aero Club (now Cramonde Cafe), and people ran to touch the machine, my own boy (since then an airman himself in the war) regarding it as something magical, as in a fairy tale or the Arabian Nights. Then on Monday afternoon, at 4 o'clock, for the first time in all history, an aeroplane, piloted by the Frenchman, Tetard, flew over Windmill Land, over Marton, and round the top of Blackpool Tower, a wonderful sight in the airy domain hitherto traversed only by those little living feathered flying-machines, the seagulls. In the evening the Frenchman made another flight round and over the Tower, returning to Squire's Gate over the sea and the sands.

During this 1910 Aviation Meeting, Loraine flew across the Ribble estuary to Southport and Wales, and Grahame White made flights to New Brighton and Barrow-in-Furness. Chavez made the record flight for height, over a mile.

Though it is but a score of years since man first flew, and everybody now is so familiar with the sight of aeroplanes—while many of us have had a trip in one—that we see nothing remarkable about them—for marvels, wireless telegraphy, wireless telephony, and others, are common in our day,—yet, when we saw the first man soar up into the sky, the machine at starting running along the ground like a heavy bird trying to use its wings, and were wondering would it succeed, and delighted when it rose a little, and then a little higher, and then up, up, and clapping our hands for joy when it mounted like a lark—we had the thrill of a thousand years, the most tremendous sensation in all the history of invention, since man began

to fashion tools and turn the elements to his service. It was the greatest thrill in the long story of mankind evolving from the Stone Age to the Sky Age, even keener than the pleasure of making the first fire, or the wonder of the first boat, the first steam engine, the first railway train, all most wonderful things when first known. But nothing so wonderful as flying. There is something more exalted, sublime, in this achievement of the human brain, the human striving and endeavour, than in all the other mechanical triumphs of man—except the invention of writing, but we should hardly put that in the machine category—something celestial, raising man into the sphere of the gods.

THE POLICE AND CHARITY.

In 1910, Hall Caine (now Sir), the Manx novelist, visited Blackpool to unveil a memorial portrait to Laycock, the poet (September 7th). In this year, too, the Corporation, chiefly on the score of sanitation, decided to scatter the Gipsy Camp at South Shore, and to-day we find the Blackpool gipsies mostly living in houses, like other folks, sending their children to Council schools, and otherwise adapting themselves, for better or for worse, to our brick-and-mortar civilisation, though the Romany ladies, despite the occasional infliction of fines for fortune-telling, still patrol the sands in summer asking visitors to cross their palms with silver.

No history of any town or place would be honestly complete without saying something of the darker side of life, the offences and crimes that bring the perpetrators into the hands of the police and the judgment of the law. For in a holiday town, a city of pleasure palaces, as elsewhere, there is human nature in all its phases, in its repulsive aspects as well as its usual and nobler ones, and there have been murders and suicides in Blackpool, though, happily, not many, and men have gone from our seaside to the gallows. I do not purpose to detail any of these cases—no good would be thereby served—let us pity and forget, and pray for the souls of those who fell to such a doom.

Also, if it be not exceeding the business of an historian to advocate humanitarianism, let us hope that capital punishment, which is useless as a deterrent, discreditable to civilisation (which should seek rather to cure crime, mostly some form of mental unbalance, than to punish it), and contrary to Christ's teaching, will soon be abolished.

As regards other crimes, Blackpool, to its credit, has not yet been, and we hope never will be, the theatre of any big swindling affairs such as tricky company promoters, or absconding bank managers, or defaulting officials of clubs, friendly societies, or organisations of that kind. In this respect Blackpool has a clean slate.

Of its police force Blackpool may be proud. Its chiefs—notably Mr. J. C. Derham—have usually been men far more anxious to save criminals than to punish them or drive them deeper in the mire, working in the intelligent Christian spirit which regards criminals as diseased or abnormal, or unfortunate, needing reformative assistance and education, and sympathetic help, rather than the old jail treatment and severities, a spirit, one is glad to note, now growing everywhere, though in some places yet the hard attitude of magistrates and chief constables to offenders dominates law and hardens justice. Blackpool Police Force is renowned for its Chief Constable's Fund, which, once a year, clothes poor children and gives them a treat, other organisations nobly assisting this excellent charity. The policeman in Blackpool is not only the protector of life and the guardian of property, he is the friend of the poor, the comrade of the unemployed, and a good fairy to little children.

THE GREAT WAR TIME.

In 1911 more Promenade extensions were completed, and the Carnegie Public Library and the Grundy Art Gallery were opened.

In 1903, July 17th, Lord Roberts, the renowned general, visited Blackpool, and had a great reception. On August 9th, 1907, the Channel Fleet anchored off Blackpool, a few miles out, and was welcomed by the

Mayor and Corporation, and in 1913 (as already told), King George and Queen Mary, while on a tour of Lancashire, visited Blackpool.

Next year, 1914, in August, began the Great War, with its degradation of man's conquest of the air to slaughter, with its submarines, and poison gas, and other diabolic devices, the world-wide war, from whose effect our trade—and morals, say some—Blackpool, along with the rest of the country, is still suffering. As it's an ill-wind that benefits nobody, Blackpool was lucky during the war. It became a training ground for the troops, and later the headquarters of the R.A.M.C. For four years it was busy from January 1st to December 31st—one continuous "season." The town flourished and grew fat, while the lads who had drilled on its Promenade marched away to battle, and to death. The conduct of some peace-time patriots was a revelation. The grab and greed of others was an irritation. War may induce instances of heroism and fine fellowship on the battlefield, but at home it seems only to increase selfishness and cowardice and induce lax morality.

But as well as these shameful sides of war, Blackpool saw much of the nobler aspects. Many of its sons went forth in the highest spirit of chivalry (two of them won the Victoria Cross), many of its women sacrificed greatly—even men growing old went and did their bit for their country, there was one South Shore Councillor among them—the women company-house keepers were in the main generous with the lads billeted on them, like good mothers to them—while some of its landlords were hard on their tenants, others were generous—war seems to bring out the worst in some and the best in others—and the pity of it is that after all the fighting and the sacrifice, so many of the men who fought and sacrificed should now be begging for bread, forgotten and ignored. But that is always the way of war.

When, voluntary enlisting failing to produce the vast number of men required for the Army, conscription came, there were many in Blackpool, as all over the country, who sought the back-door of "exemp-

tion'' on the plea of helping in home service, or of being " indispensable " to the firm they belonged to (as if any man in the world was indispensable, for the cleverest has to die some day), or some other excuse, and these, along with neutral foreigners, made money while the lads who were fighting to defend the home businesses fell in battle or returned to unemployment. Many farmers got exemptions for their sons. In the towns, as well as the urban districts, the desire to become special constables to avoid going to the " front " was almost a fever. All these men, of course, prattled bravely about " King and Country " and were the loudest in shouting and singing the National Anthem at meetings, concerts for the wounded, etc., and then, when peace came, they, humbly conscious of the great part they had played, had medals made to commemorate their gallant service as " special constables "—there was quite a glut of " special constables "—during war-time.

There were also " conscientious objectors " on religious grounds, and certainly war is anti-Christian. Some of these were humbugs, but many were genuine, and the honest " c.o." is a more heroic character than the man getting a tricky exemption.

The war was a revelation of the cowardice and greed of a great many men, the dodges to avoid active service, the food hoarding (of those with means) before Government food control distributed and divided evenly the necessaries of life. As these matters are carefully omitted in the usual histories of war, which expatiate only on the military features (and then suppress the facts about the horrors and disciplinary barbarities), perhaps it is time that somebody told a bit of the truth about the aspects and effects of war from an honest citizen's point of view and observation.

All through history, as we have seen, there have been wars, invasion of this country by other nations—Romans, Norsemen, Saxons, and Normans—and that meant resistance and fighting. Then there were disputes and divisions in our own country that led to wars amongst ourselves, as when there were seven separate kingdoms in England, and Wales and Scotland

separate as well, and later, owing to rivalries and quarrels of royal families, the Wars of the Roses, the Civil War, and the rebellions of 1715 and 1745, in which Blackpool and the Fylde, along with other parts of Lancashire, were concerned and suffered.

Even later than these big affairs, wholesale fightings, as we might call them, there were enmities and strifes, as between clans and tribes, between different villages and towns. Strangers were regarded as foes, and their presence or intrusion into a community resented (this is yet so to-day in some parts of the Fylde adjoining Blackpool). The Fylde villages used to be like cocks crowing and challenging, though one would think human beings were a little more advanced than farm-yard fowls. Thornber in his history tells how the youths of the villages of Marton and Layton and Blackpool used to fight, just for devilment. The youths of one locality would come to another, asking for the tails of their coats to be trod upon, boasting that Layton could beat Blackpool with fists, swanking of pugilistic powers, warning outsiders to keep in their own territory or there would be trouble—in short, exactly the same silly process as produces foreign ructions and starts big wars—till feuds and fights became chronic weekly affairs. But, happily, under religion and education, these affairs of ignorance and foolish conceit have gradually died out, as some day, we hope and pray, absurd international animosities will evolve to reason and peace.

During the 1914-1918 European War the then Mayor (now Sir Albert Lindsay Parkinson) worked excellently for Blackpool, seeing to the food supply and keeping grabbers in check. When the farmers threatened to bring no milk into the town because of some disagreement about prices, he arranged to purchase milk wholesale and organised its quick and equitable distribution. These measures brought the dairymen to sense and fairplay.

I remember seeing battalions of soldiers march to the station in the night, to the war ditties, " It's a long way to Tipperary," " Pack up your troubles in your old kit-bag," and others; I hear the cheers; I see

the half-shed tears; and then I feel the silence, and I think of faces that came home no more. There were some in our street, some in every street. One could make a long list. There was George Heys (Lieut.-Col.), a jolly fellow and generous—he was blown to bits in the Dardanelles in 1915—at the age of 49. Many will recall his witty remarks and his humorous speeches as chairman of the Golf Club. W. T. Birch, the veteran South Shore bard, has a beautiful poem on "The Haunted Links of Harrowside," mourning those who went to the war and never came back. There were mothers, wives, sisters, sweethearts, mourning everywhere. It is easy to patter about "glory" and "eternal remembrance," and "dying for King and Country," but the desolate heart knoweth what the bitterness of separation by death means, and clattering phrases bring small consolation.

But—if a little historian may voice a great comfort—deeper than the old formal words is the instinctive voice of the eternal hope, and the assurance of those who in our day have had the revelation that death is merely the end of an earthly chapter in the serial of immortal life. Since the beginning of the twentieth century there has been great development in the study of psychic questions—startling discoveries as to the mysteries of mind and spirit, and Spiritualism has given evidence that our souls go marching on. The honest historian must speak as he finds, and I know of what to me, anyhow (and I don't think I am more credible or less intelligent than the majority of people), is conclusive proof of "spirit-return." Naturally, during the war and since, the wholesale bereavement caused many mourners to seek light and comfort in Spiritualism, and though there may have been much delusion, and perhaps deceit in some cases, undoubtedly there have been genuine phenomena and proved messages.

Another consequence of the war is the number of mateless maids, the girls whose sweethearts and possible husbands fell in the fighting, and of these Blackpool has its share, some of them exhibiting those amorous audacities, in dress and demeanour, due to

the abnormal numerical inequality of the sexes, which excite the denunciation of the preachers and the censuring criticism of the moralist. Yet there is pitifulness in it, too, for it is the perfectly natural desire of every maid to have a husband and a nest of her own. But the war has robbed tens and tens of thousands of girls of their due matrimony. The 1921 census revealed two million more females than males in Great Britain, and in Blackpool there were over 10,000 more females than males, out of a population of about 90,000.

On November 10th, 1923, Blackpool's war memorial, a tall cenotaph, like " Cleopatra's Needle " (the cost of over £17,000 being defrayed out of munition profits at the Electricity Works), was unveiled. On it are the names of the hundreds of Blackpool soldiers who fell in the Great War. Thus are the dead honoured, and rightly, yet there seems somewhat of mockery about this ceremony when thousands of living ex-soldiers are in want, and the wives and children of many of those who died are struggling for bread, and even rendered homeless by the property owners for whom husband and father made " the great sacrifice." Under the New Rent Act of 1923 (giving anybody who could buy a house power to take possession), a slain soldier's widow and orphans were turned out while the crowd was gathered round the cenotaph on which her husband's name was inscribed.

Such was the law, and the judge had to administer it, though he said he was sorry for the widow. But it is law made by those who said that those who served their country should have fair play in a land made " fit for heroes to live in,"—law made by those who love the limelight of memorial exhibitions to the dead but are callously negligent in their duty to the living.

Blackpool, in the main, however, has done much to assist the unemployed ex-soldiers and their families, and its Chief Constable's Fund, and other charities, have helped the widows and orphans.

XXV.

CATERING FOR MIND AND SOUL.

Blackpool's first care and fundamental consideration was, very naturally, as we have seen, catering for visitors, in the alimentary, accommodating, and amusement lines. These were the first calls upon its resources, the first steps in its development. First fodder and fun, and then, if all be well, pabulum for the mind, excursions for the fancy, dreams for the soul.

"Man does not live by bread alone," and "Where there is no vision the people perish,"—where there is not the vision of the prophet, the poet, the painter, the musician, the sculptor, and every other kind of artist to reveal and enlighten and uplift and delight. Fortunately, the powers and forces controlling human evolution always ordain that even amongst the multitude mainly engrossed by material things there shall be a few souls of vision, pointing to wondrous mental worlds and sublime spiritual heights, and so even in Blackpool, from its beginnings there were some who had ideals of making Blackpool a great city in every sense and way, with all the forms and blessings of art, as well as of municipal enterprise, and these pioneers, some few remembered, some forgotten, wrought well in their day, by doing the work for love and seeking no reward, as is the way of this noble type.

The Blackpool Public Library movement began in 1878 (February 26th), at a banquet held in honour of Ald. W. H. Cocker. Mr. Richard Handley, in a speech given on that occasion, after expatiating on Blackpool's business progress, said they must not neglect the intellectual side, and he was sure that a Free Library would be welcomed by both visitors and residents. Mr. James McKay, then editor of the Blackpool "Gazette," encouraged by Councillor John

Grime, the proprietor, always enthusiastic in the cause of education, literature and art, advocated a Free Library in that paper, and introduced the subject at the Blackpool Literary Society's meeting, with the result that a Free Public Library, in the Octagon Room, Assembly Rooms, Talbot Square, was opened in 1880 (18th June) by the Earl of Derby. Later, the Library was transferred to old St. John's Market (now municipal offices and shops).

The South Shore Library, Lytham Road, was opened in 1893, Revoe Library, Museum and Gymnasium (Central Drive), in 1904.

In 1902 the chairman of the Library Committee approached Mr. Andrew Carnegie, the American millionaire, whose hobby was to endow colleges, give public libraries and church organs, to see if he would help in providing Blackpool with further library accommodation. This appeal was unsuccessful, but in 1906 Mr. Carnegie was again asked, and agreed to provide £15,000 for the erection of a new free Public Library.

Then in 1908 Mr. Cuthbert C. Grundy (now Sir) himself an artist, on behalf of his brother (Mr. J. R. G. Grundy) and himself, offered to give an Art Gallery to the borough, suggesting that this building should be designed by the architects for the new Library, should be alongside it, and in keeping with it in elevation and style. This idea was carried out, and the new Central Public Library and Art Gallery, twin buildings consolidated in one block, were opened on 26th October, 1911, by Lord Shuttleworth, during the mayoralty of Alderman Broadhead. In this Library are portraits of Dr. W. H. Cocker (Blackpool's first Mayor and Freeman), and his father, Dr. John Cocker, Rev. W. Thornber, author of the first "History of Blackpool," the Rev. James Wayman, the Rev. J. S. Balmer, Mr. Samuel Laycock (the Lancashire poet), and other worthies, as well as a collection got together by the Librarian, Mr. R. Hill, of many interesting views and photographs of Blackpool in bygone days.

If all the newspaper verses from the ditty "We'll all go toddlin' off to Blackpool," to ambitious poems on sunsets, and stories, and holiday sketches, and articles about Blackpool were collected, they would make material for many volumes. Regretfully one must confess that there would be more quantity than quality, for alas! while many souls in holiday scenes and moods have the poetic feeling or inspiration, few have the power to achieve artistic expression. As we have seen in previous chapters, the rhymsters began early to make the place a theme, artfully linking poetic praise with bold advertisement.

Edwin Waugh, the Lancashire writer, wrote much about Blackpool and district. He has a humorous account of a high tide.

The Blackpool high tides were advertised in the inland towns in those days, and the railway companies ran cheap excursions. Edwin Waugh came on a trip to see the great high tide. Unfortunately, the high tide was not a success. It did not come off. There was no wind, and not a wave splashed over on to the Promenade. The sea was as calm as a duck-pond, says Waugh, and makes jolly fun of the whole affair. But Waugh wrote most about Norbreck and Bispham and inland walks to Shard Bridge and over the Wyre, and his accounts of these jaunts are excellent stuff.

Ben Brierley also wrote about Blackpool, and so did Samuel Laycock, who made the town his home. His "Ode to th' Ocean" is one of the best poems inspired by Blackpool sea. It is written in the Lancashire folk-speech.

After apostrophising the sea in Byronic style (but in Lancashire dialect)—

> "Rowl away tha grand owd ocean,
> Like some giant in devotion—"

Laycock speaks of its stormy moods when—

> "I tell thee what, friend, tha's been carryin' on strangely,
> Tha's been on for a bit of a marlock, I think,
> An' tha seems eaut o' humour wi' summat or other,
> What's to do wi' thee like? Hast been havin' some drink?"

He also wrote poems about the lifeboat and his friend Bob Bickerstaffe, the coxswain (1887).

"His spurs have been won eaut i' th' lifeboat,
An' he's won 'em mooast manfully, too,
Showin' true pluck when i' danger,
An' encouragin' on his brave crew."

BLACKPOOL IN LANCASHIRE LITERATURE.

My bosom friend, Teddy Ashton, has written many dialect sketches about Blackpool—more than any man, I should think—but as they are pretty well known we need not quote any of them here, though I may add that only last year a Blackpool gentleman told me that while on holiday in the Wye Valley he was surprised and delighted one evening when a concert was held indoors, to find the comic recitation, "Heaw a Family were Sundered at Blackpool," as one of the items on the programme, and it kept the company in a roar. It is in the earlier editions of Teddy Ashton's "Gradely Guide to Blackpool."

Some excellent descriptions of Blackpool and Knott End were written by a Rochdale writer, Trafford Clegg, who died in 1895 (at the early age of 38). The Blackpool sketches are entitled "Blackpool Nowts." A man fond of criticising and hard to please says there is "nowt" to see in Blackpool. Trafford Clegg takes him round and shows him how vastly he is mistaken.

Of Blackpool, he says "I've looked o'er our island edge, fro' mony a cliff an' sandy point, but nowheer found a finer stretch o' say, nor wrostled wi' mooar life-strengthening wind."

And Trafford Clegg should be a good judge of sea-air, for he went to many resorts in search of health. He was cut off in his prime by consumption.

The critic he takes around and "down" is called Ben, and Ben says, "There's no scenery at Blackpool. Th' country's as bare as th' back of a pigeon-flyer's neck."

"That's summat fresh," says Clegg. "What should pigeon-flyers have bare necks for?"

" Because they rub th' yure off wi' gawpin' into th' sky so much, don't they?"

However, Ben is taken into the fields, and to St. Annes and Lytham, and shown some scenery.

Trafford Clegg thus describes Blackpool (about the year 1891): " We stood between th' piers (North and Central), facin' th' wayter, an' took stock o' th' creawded street runnin' by th' sea-brim for a good mile to reet hond and left. Behind us were th' long sweep of fine-fronted heauses, curvin' away fro' th' owd Star Inn, standin' off independent among its sandhills, to th' risin' greaund at th' north end. Hundreds o' folk shoved us abeaut, tram-cars slurred past, 'buses, carts, an' carriages rattled up an' deawn, toffee, fleawer an' papper sellers sheauted, dogs yelped an' seaunds o' music floated fro' different bands—aw were life an' din. Both piers were crowded, breet wi' colour fro' th' women's fancy frocks, full o' stir an' bustle. On one pier th' fashionable folk swaggert, thryin' to look as if they'd never sarved o'er a shop counter, nor gone late to th' beef market buyin' cheap cuts; on t' other were th' gradely folk, lookin' like what they were, an' dancin' as hard as they could. Steamers rocked at the jetty ends as th' breawn wayter come tumblin' in, little cockboats an' yachts dodgin' abeaut like wick things close to land, an' two or three big ships showin' their broad sails, far back, wheer th' Welsh hills were peepin' above th' wayter-line. Th' sands were scattered o'er wi' knots o' folk, delvin' children, bathin' boxes, toddlin' jackasses, nigger minstrels, cocoa-nut merchants, photographers, Punch and Judy artists, parasols, boatmen lost in their shoon, oyster stalls, Salvationists, fish-hawkers, baby carriages, and German bands."

" If tha' caws that nowt," says the author to Ben, " tha'rt ill to please. There's summat here to fit aw tastes, surelee."

There was a Lancaster bookseller, who wrote under the name of "Timothy Thraddlepin," published a humorous dialect " gradely guide " to Blackpool away back in the eighties.

Mr. Arthur Laycock, in his novel, " Warren of Manchester," describes Blackpool and its amusement palaces.

If I may mention my own stuff, a great deal of the old history of Blackpool, about the old Gynn, and the wrecks there, and the " Pea-soup " wreck, and about old Bagot, the Parish Clerk, in the eighteen-fifties, is interwoven in the book, " Tales of Old Blackpool and the Fylde," as also in my novel " A Workaday Wooing " (or " The Knobstick "), where the holiday of a couple of young lovers at Blackpool is described. " They were out early on the sands when the morn had just arisen . . and at night they watched the water foam on the Promenade with hoarse rumble and roar . . and from afar came the solemn sound of the sea that sang so strangely to their souls . . and in the day between the dawn and the dark, came the prose between the poetry, and they visited the places of amusement, and saw dancers and ballets, and conjurors and acrobats and heard singers, and the streets were full of people, and there were many children always under the feet, and there were large-lunged men at the doors of restaurants bawling raucously, ' This way for a good shillin' dinner, roast lamb, mutton, etc.,' and they went in some popular gardens (Raikes Hall) and there was much dancing on a great open-air platform, and boats on a lake, . . . and they were happy, and all the world was a romance by the sea, for they were in love."

Mr. Langford Saunders, who died not long ago, and who lived for a time at Blackpool, has comic sketches of some of our seaside sights in his book " Lancashire Humour and Pathos." He describes one of the auction-rooms where holiday geese are plucked. He tells of the auctioneer " stuffin' " 'em like this: " The firm I represent, ladies and gentlemen, is one of the largest in England. They manufacture most of the goods I sell, and they own one of the richest mines in Africa. The governor says to me, ' Go to Blackpool, and let the people have bargains.' Bargains! Yes, I am here to give 'em you. Now here's

a pipe. Best briar, amber mouthpiece, solid silver-mounted. My bid's a penny."

And so on. The author says of these auctioneers, " They tak' as much brass eawt o' th' teawn as keeps 'em for th' rest o' th' year, an' it's not fair to th' shopkeepers, what has to squeeze through th' winter as best they con."

W. Hartley Bracewell, a Blackpool journalist and poet, has the scenes of his " Tales of the Cliffs " in Blackpool and neighbourhood.

Wm. Thomas Birch, of South Shore, has many pretty pieces describing Blackpool beach and the Fylde in his book of " Poems."

George Moore, the novelist, in his story " A Mummer's Wife," which gives an account of a comic opera on tour (" Les Cloches de Corneville "), tells the adventures of the company in Blackpool.

In the sister art of painting, Sir Cuthbert Grundy has made pictures of Blackpool's shore and sea, as also have Mr. Fred Balshaw, Mr. Levi Lumb, and others.

There is a Blackpool Literary and Scientific Society, which has interesting meetings and lectures during the winter. Literary societies do not, as a rule, attract the crowd, and in this respect Blackpool is much the same as other towns, perhaps better, for the Blackpool Literary Society has a good membership and gets large audiences, though, of course, not so big as the whist drives and dances. Very few of Blackpool's " great " men are book-readers. One of them, an Alderman and ex-Mayor, told a friend of mine that he " never read books," not even histories of the town whose chief citizen he had been. A surprising admission. For though books are not everything, still one expects a public man to read a few in order to acquire knowledge and breadth of mind.

EDUCATION.

Blackpool School Board was formed in 1899. In 1902 it became Blackpool Education Authority, with sixteen schools under its control; Palatine Road School

being an advanced school, as also is the Secondary School, Raikes Road, which cost £20,597. There are fourteen public elementary schools—St. John's Parish Church National, Victoria Street, Tyldesley Road, Talbot Road Catholic, Christ Church National, Queen Street, Ashburton Road Council Schools,

Bispham Church about 1820.

St. Cuthbert's Catholic, Crystal Road, Revoe Council School, South Shore Council School, Devonshire Road Council School, Marton Free School (originally Baines' School, from an endowment by James Baines, of Poulton, in 1717), Marton Infants' School, St. Kentigern's Catholic (Newton Drive), Waterloo Council School, Claremont Council School,

and Bispham Endowed School (originally the gift of Richard Higginson, London, in 1659).

Mr. A. E. Ikin, L.LB., B.Sc., is the Director of Education. He takes excellent interest in his work, and issues useful booklets giving information about the various educational facilities, industrial and professional opportunities, in the town.

BLACKPOOL'S MOTHER-CHURCH.

The mother-church of Blackpool is Bispham Church (see also Chapter IX.), first mentioned as the "Church of Biscopham" in the reign of Richard I. (1189-1199). In 1773 the old church was partly rebuilt, and, a century later (1883), entirely rebuilt, on the old foundations. Its registers go back to the year 1500. Daughter churches of the Bispham mother-church are Blackpool Parish Church (St. John's), Holy Trinity (South Shore), Christ Church, and St. Paul's. Its curates and vicars (a list compiled by Henry C. Richmond) have been as follows:—

1530—Sir William Sylkok.
1552—Sir William Corwyn.
1559—Jerome Allen.
1614—Robert Brodbelt.
1634—Robert Freckleton.
Before 1646—John Sumpner.
1648—John Fisher.
1651—John Barclay.
1671—Robert Wayte.
1690—Thomas Riley.
1692—Thomas Sollom.
1693—Jonathan Hayton.
1728—Christopher Albin.
1753—Roger Freckleton (died).
1760—Ashton Werden (died).
1767—John Armetriding (died).
1791—William Elston (died).
1831—Charles Hesketh, M.A. (resigned).
1837—Bennett Williams, M.A. (resigned).
1850—Henry Powell. M.A. (resigned).

1857—W. A. Mocalta, M.A. (resigned).
1861—James Leighton, M.A. (resigned).
1874—C. S. Hope, M.A. (resigned).
1876—Francis John Dickson (resigned).
1885—George Leighton (resigned).
1922—Henry Ward (present Vicar).

BLACKPOOL PARISH CHURCH.

The Parish Church, St. John's (rebuilt 1877-8, and again in 1894) has had the following vicars:—
1821—James Formby, B.A. (resigned 1826).
1826—G. L. Foxton, B.A. (resigned 1829).
1829—Wm. Thornber, B.A. (resigned 1846).
1846—W. T. Preedy, B.A. (resigned 1853).
1853—Alfred Jenour, M.A. (died 1869).
1868—Norman S. Jeffrey, M.A. (resigned 1915; died 1919, aged 86).
1915—A. W. R. Little, M.A.

The Rev. W. Thornber, B.A. (particulars of whose career have already been given), wrote what was really the first "History of Blackpool" (Hutton's little book is more a description than a history) in 1837, during his seventeen years' vicariate.

SOUTH SHORE CHURCH.

As already related, South Shore began with the erection of the first house there by Thomas Moore, in 1819 (his grave is in the South Shore Churchyard). The old Church, Holy Trinity, was erected in 1836. Its succession of vicars is as follows:—
1837—Geo. F. Greene, M.A. (resigned 1841).
1841—John Edwards (resigned 1845).
1845—C. K. Dean (resigned 1848).
1848—T. B. Banner, M.A. (resigned 1853).
1853—J. B. Wakefield (resigned 1870).
1870—J. Ford Simmons (resigned 1881).
1881—S. Y. B. Bradshaw (resigned 1905, died 1920).
1905 (June 2nd)—F. H. Powell, A.K.C. (died 1920).
1920 (September 22nd)—P. C. Dean, M.A., A.K.C.

(From picture lent by F. J. Brandwood's friends.)

South Shore Church and School, 1837.

In 1888 the building of the present South Shore Church (one of the finest samples of ecclesiastical architecture in the town) began by the erection, at the east end, of a transept, joined up to the old structure. The inscription on the foundation-stone (which may be seen in the wall at the back of the church), as well as the Christian era date, 1888, gives the Masonic date A.L. 5888, along with a Masonic sign (a circle around two interlinked triangles), indicating that the Masonic brethren had considerable to do with this development. The new front part of the church was undertaken in 1894, the corner stone bearing the name of James Parrott, a well-known South Shore resident and member of the church. The ornamental stone pulpit is a memorial (subscribed by the congregation) to the wife of the Rev. S. Y. B. Bradshaw, a genial, scholarly gentleman, the esteemed vicar for twenty-five years.

The Rev. F. H. Powell, who followed Mr. Bradshaw, was an author, writer of tales and verses.

Divine service at Marton was first held in Baines's Endowed School (now Marton School), by a curate named Sawyer, in 1764. He was succeeded in 1772 by the Rev. George Hall, during whose time the church was erected, in 1800, but not consecrated till 1804. The east end of the church was added in 1857 and the chancel in 1871.

The pulpit and reading-desk were presented by Miss Heywood, daughter of Sir Benjamin Heywood, who had on Blackpool Promenade a mansion, which subsequently became the Aquarium, and was eventually incorporated in the Tower buildings. The old Marton Church was pulled down and a noble new structure built on its site in 1909 (consecrated May 28th).

The following have been vicars of Marton Church :—

1800—George Hall (died 1814).
1814—Thomas Bryer (resigned).

1841—Jas. Cookson, M.A. (resigned 1889).
(Mr. Cookson came as curate-in-charge in 1841 and was made incumbent in 1843.)
1889—James Crabtree.

The Rev. James Crabtree is still the vicar, and has only once missed taking the service in thirty-three years (and that was during an illness when the doctor forbade him). It is a remarkable fact that Marton Church has only had two vicars during the last eighty years. The Marton climate must be splendidly conducive to longevity, especially for clergymen, who, apart from surroundings, are the longest-lived profession, but, with the Marton salubrity added, seem capable of going on for ever, or at least, of christening, marrying, and burying four generations during their span.

Christ Church, originally a small iron structure in 1861 (but not consecrated till 1870) was founded by the Rev. C. H. Wainwright, a man of aristocratic pedigree and culture, one of the town's mental giants, a well-known lecturer on Church defence and other ecclesiastic problems of his time. He was succeeded by the Rev. Job Edwards (previously curate at the Parish Church), a big muscular parson, jolly and fraternal with everybody, much helped by his wife, who was a great worker on education and other committees. The Rev. Samuel Schor followed Mr. Edwards, and left in 1922, to take up an appointment in London.

St. Paul's Church, North Shore, a growth from Christ Church, was originated by the Rev. C. H. Wainwright, to meet the needs of the developing district. It began with the usual small "tin tabernacle." But in 1898 the present fine church was begun, the foundation-stone being laid by Lord Skelmersdale, with Masonic ceremony. Its first vicar was the Rev. R. Lavers Kemp, who was succeeded by the Rev. H. C. Parslew.

St. Thomas's Church, Caunce Street (Rev. W. H. Lang), 1905, and St. Mark's Mission Church, Layton (Rev. W. T. Evans), are other offshoots from Christ Church.

All Saints' Church, Palatine Road, was started by the Rev. T. H. Ethell, curate at St. John's Parish Church, who for years conducted services at Victoria Schools. It was not a rich parish, and the young curate had a ceaseless and severe struggle to keep the work on, but he laboured indomitably and won the success he deserved so well, becoming the first vicar of the new church in 1904. He was succeeded on his resignation by the Rev. A. W. R. Little (now Vicar of Blackpool), Dean Parkyn (retired 1921, one of the finest preachers Blackpool has had), and the Rev. P. B. Thorburn, the present vicar.

An offshoot from All Saints' is St. Andrew's Mission Church, Ibbison Street, Revoe (1906), where excellent work has been done for many years by the lay reader, Mr. J. Walker, and his wife. Those who knew the locality and its roughness twenty years ago can appreciate the good Christian work done by Mr. Walker, as kindly and patient a soul as ever laboured in the Master's vineyard. What is more, he has made the place self-supporting. He has now another lay reader to assist him, his son-in-law, Mr. F. J. W. Wheadon, who takes a most active interest in the parish.

Offshoots from South Shore Parish Church are St. Peter's (Rev. Baird Smith, vicar), Lytham Road (1908), being erected after a score of years existence as a mission-room; the Church of the Holy Cross, St. Annes Road (really a mission-room yet), Rev. E. W. Parslew; St. Mary's (a mission-room, too), Highfield Road. Rev. W. Binch, 1920. This church has, like many others, quite a romantic history; it originated in the zeal of Mrs. Martha Nutter, and the first services (October 30th, 1908) were held in a stable loft, some of the worshippers taking candles for light, and their own chairs; also St. Nicholas' Mission Church, Marton Moss (lay reader, Mr. Frank Wild).

St. Stephen's Church, 1911, on the North Shore Cliffs, beyond "Uncle Tom's," is an offshoot from Bispham, the mother church of Blackpool (vicar, the Rev. F. B. Freshwater).

NONCONFORMIST PLACES OF WORSHIP.

During the last twenty-five years, owing to the vast growth of Blackpool, and the need for spiritual catering of all kinds, there has been considerable Nonconformist development.

As related in Chapter XVII., the first Nonconformist place of worship in Blackpool was the Bethesda Chapel (Independent or Congregationalist), opened 6th July, 1826, five years after the Parish Church (St. John's) was consecrated, 6th July, 1821 by the Bishop of Chester (Dr. Law). The new Bethesda Church, on the same spot, was opened in 1900.

In 1860, the Union Baptist Chapel, Abingdon Street, was opened (the Government purchased the old building in 1903, and put the General Post Office on the site); in 1861, the Adelaide Street Wesleyan (on the site of one erected in 1835); 1864, the United Methodist in Adelaide Street; in 1869, the Rawcliffe Street Wesleyan (Ebenezer), South Shore, the whole cost being defrayed by Francis Parnell (who, ten years later, became Mayor of Blackpool), the first service being held on 2nd September, 1869, by the Rev. W. H. Taylor, of Manchester. Since then a beautiful new chapel has been erected (1888), the old one now being used as a school.

In 1875, May 22nd, the foundation stone of the Primitive Methodist Chapel in Chapel Street was laid by Mr. D. Fairhurst, of Wigan, and the place was opened on August 29th of the same year, by the Rev. E. Newsome, the resident minister.

In the same year and month the Unitarian Chapel, Banks Street, North Shore, was opened by the Rev. J. R. Smith. Towards the end of the eighteen-nineties the South Shore Unitarians, under the Rev. H. Bodell Smith, held services in the Masonic Hall, Waterloo Road. They began this century by building the Unitarian Church in Lytham Road.

PIONEERS.

In the 1870's, the Rev. James Wayman (died 1899), a fine orator and poet, a leading figure in

political and progressive movements, and when lecturing in inland towns, used to show lantern slides of Blackpool, was minister at Victoria Street Congregational Church. Wayman, on the Nonconformist and Radical side, and Wainwright on the Church and Conservative side, were the two champion word-fighters of the opposing forces of that time.

When the Rev. Samuel Pilling (happily still with us in Blackpool) was at the Union Baptist Chapel, familiarly called "Abingdon Street," 1875-1894, the place was a centre of intellectual, civic, and spiritual activities. "The Schoolroom," says Mr. James Bowman, editor of the "St. Annes Express," and once a scholar at Abingdon Street, "was the rallying-place for all kinds of objects and movements (sacred and secular, if there is any dividing-line), regardless of "isms." The Vicar of Christ Church (Rev. C. H. Wainwright) attended the annual gathering at Abingdon Street, whence radiated a quiet tolerant influence that wrought much good in the town.

Mr. Wayman and Mr. Pilling originated the "Blackpool Times" (1877), being the first editors, jointly. They also had a hand in the first Corporation Guide to Blackpool, in the eighties. The Corporation offered a prize of £25 for the best guide. Mr. Pilling, Mr. Wayman, and Mr. Smith (sub-editor), working together, won the prize.

As has been mentioned before, Blackpool Corporation have Parliamentary powers to levy a 2d. rate for advertising purposes (last year it amounted to £6,000), and, as well as billposting and advertisements in newspapers, they issue an elegant Official Guide Book annually, excellently written, and beautifully illustrated.

Mr. George Martin, a clever Blackpool journalist on the "Times" in the nineties, was responsible for the guide books of that period. To-day the Official Guide is written by Mr. Harold L. Whiteside, a former Blackpool journalist, now on a Yarmouth paper.

Mr. William Wilson, editor of the "Gazette" in the early eighties, was a man of high literary attain-

ments. He was a native of Windermere. He worked as a compositor before becoming reporter and editor. He published a book of poems, " Pegasus in Lakeland," and wrote verses about the Blackpool lifeboat.

Mr. George Edgar, formerly on the " Gazette and Herald " staff, who died a few years ago, earned fame as a novelist, author of " Pride of the Fancy," etc.

OTHER CHURCHES.

The Congregational Church in Victoria Street was opened in 1849. Here in the eighteen-nineties officiated the Rev. William Evans, a breezy, good-humoured preacher, popular with all denominations, and affectionately dubbed " the Vicar of Bank Hey " (the church being in Bank Hey Ward). The present minister is the Rev. Fred Hibbert, eloquent, democratic and tolerant.

During recent years Congregational Churches have been erected in Warley Road, North Shore (1897), Alexandra Road, South Shore (1898), and Cavendish Road, Bispham.

The Wesleyans have churches in Raikes Parade (1909), Dickson Road, Highfield Avenue, and Bispham, as well as a little out-of-the-way chapel erected so far back as 1872 at Walker's Hill, Runnell Road, in the pretty rural surroundings on the edge of Marton going towards Stockeydale and Marton Moss.

The United Methodists have chapels in Springfield Road (1889), Shaw Road (1891), and Newton Drive (1909), while the Baptists have the Tabernacle, 1904 (very much larger than the original Union Chapel in Abingdon Street), in Springfield Road, Whitegate Drive, 1909, and Station Road, South Shore (opened May 13th, 1910).

The Primitive Methodists have flourishing branches at Layton, in Central Drive (1908), and Egerton Road—Ebenezer Chapel (1900), started by Adelaide Street Methodists in the Rev. J. S. Balmer's time.

The Catholic Church of the Sacred Heart, Talbot Road, was erected in 1857. There are also

the Catholic Churches of St. Cuthbert's, Lytham Road (1886), and St. Kentigern's, Newton Drive.

The Spiritual Church in Charnley Road was opened in 1896 by Mrs. Butterworth, member of a family prominent in local Spiritualism.

Blackpool has had, and still has, great preachers, ministers who have wrought well for Christianity and culture, for education and progress, not without bigotry and fanaticism in some cases, but in the main making for tolerance and advance. Wayman, Pilling, Wainwright, Balmer, and others have been mentioned, and, later, the Rev. H. Bodell Smith. To-day, the Vicar of Blackpool (Rev. A. W. R. Little), the Rev. W. T. Evans, the Rev. Edward Morgan (died while this book was going through the press), the Rev. Fred Hibbert, the Rev. W. M. Simm, the Rev. F. W. C. Woollett, the Rev. W. T. Evans, the Rev. F. B. Freshwater, Rev. H. E. Bennett, Rev. Morton Gledhill, Rev. D. Oakley, and others, often deal with questions of the day, bravely and outspokenly, in the pulpit, applying Christianity as a test of modern life and conditions. Most of the churches and Sunday Schools are associated with educative and enlightening work by means of lectures, literary, scientific, musical, and on citizenship, etc., in the winter. The Corporation, too, through the Education Department, under Dr. A. E. Ikin, does much in this direction.

POLITICAL PARTIES, ETC.

In these days, political labels are numerous and vague, but a generation ago the political parties were practically only two—the Conservatives and Liberals. Of course, there were Labour men and Socialists, but they were only a few crying in the wilderness then. The political arena was Church Street, where the Liberals had their headquarters on the site now occupied by the Clifton Cinema Palace, while the Conservatives had premises higher up, on the opposite side (where now is Willie Holt's Billiard Saloon). The Conservatives decided to have a more pretentious place, and built the fine Wainwright Conservative

Club Rooms (called " Wainwright " after the son of the Rev. C. H. Wainwright, a young man of great political promise), in Victoria Street, the foundation stone being laid by Mr. Balfour on January 12th, 1898. The Liberals promptly followed suit, and two months afterwards, March 16th, the foundation stone of their new commodious premises was laid in the same street, but, very naturally, on the opposite side. Thus the two great parties in Blackpool have always been neighbours, if foes. The new Liberal Club got opened first in 1899, the Conservative Club being opened by Lord Derby the following year.

The Socialists have no hall in Blackpool, neither has the Labour Party. They hire rooms for their meetings and lectures. The Trades and Labour Council meets at the rooms of the Trades and Labour Club, erected in 1900, in Upper Adelaide Street. Blackpool is not strong in Labour and Trade Union organisations, because it has no great industrial population. Its huge main business is company-house keeping, and the company-house keepers have an association under the title of " Blackpool Boarding and Apartment House Proprietors," but so far they have no hall or room of their own.

CHARITY.

If, as St. Paul says, speaking of Faith, Hope, and Charity, " the greatest of these is Charity," then Blackpool, in spite of its pleasure-making (or is it because of it?) is one of the most truly religious places in the land, for Blackpool is great in charity. Its Ladies' Sick Poor Association, Victoria Hospital, as well as various societies, such as the " US," the gentlemen of the Club Trains, Mr. Mark Shaffer's annual treat and motor-ride to cripple children, and other benevolent persons and institutions, such as the Orphanage, all do something for the poor children, or for the unemployed, or the sick and afflicted.

But biggest of all is the Chief Constable's Clothing Fund, to which most of the clubs (football, etc.), societies, employees at works and places of amusement, etc., contribute, as well as private individuals,

and clothing firms, bread firms, provision firms, toy firms, etc.

The fund was originated by the late Chief Constable, Mr. John C. Derham, in the eighteen-nineties, assisted by members of the Police Force and their wives, the Blackpool Nursing Division, and the St. John Ambulance Brigade. In 1903 a committee to organise and manage the fund was formed under the title of " The Theatrical and Music Hall Sports Committee," with Mr. George Harrop (General Manager of the Tower-Palace-Grand) as chairman, Councillor Harry Brooks and Mr. H. Sharrock hon. treasurers, and Mr. Tom Brunskill (journalist) hon. secretary. Mr. Fred Waller, of the Palace, helped greatly. A two-days' sports meeting resulted in a sum of £211 5s. 1d. for the fund. In 1904 the Tower-Palace Company gave the free use of the Palace Theatre, defraying all expenses, for a matinee performance for the fund, and this has been an annual event ever since, with receipts as follows:—1904, £240 14s., increasing to 1914, £602 10s. 11d., and in 1918 £1,885 19s. 10d.; 1919, £1,992 18s. 5d.; 1920, £2,104 18s. 3d.; 1921, £1,851 2s. 4d. (a drop); 1922, £1,864 10s. 10d.

Chief Constable J. C. Derham died in 1911, but the work he began is carried on excellently by his successor and son, Chief Constable Herbert E. Derham, a broad-minded, humane man, diligent in helping the poor and afflicted, assisting the fallen, and reclaiming those who break the law. Under his lead the Blackpool police are not merely uniformed servants of law and order, they are the friends of the citizens. Persons in poverty or trouble have only to state their case to the police and they will be helped. The Chief Constable's Fund is not limited to feeding and clothing poor children. It helps their parents and other adults. During the last twenty years a total of £15,964 8s. 10d. has been raised, to provide food, fuel, and temporary assistance for grown-ups, as well as clothes, boots, shoes, clogs, etc., for thousands of needy children children during the winter.

Blackpool's Police Force, I believe, is unique in this respect, and is doing a noble work, by its help

keeping many people from despair and crime. In the winter of 1921-2, when there was severe distress amongst the unemployed, the Chief Constable made special appeals for help, and tradesmen and the public generally responded well, with food and money. Best of all was the fraternal spirit the police showed with the workless and their demonstrations, not harrying them and batoning them, as in some towns, but sympathising, advising, and helping in every way.

It is a good, and yet a pathetic, sight in the rooms of the Police Court when the poor children are getting their clothes and the place of Law and Justice is transformed into a Temple of Charity and Succour. It is fine to see the big policemen fitting stockings and clogs and coats on to little boys and girls and talking to them like kind fathers and great brothers while at the happy job. Because of this helpful paternal fellowship, the poor children of Blackpool do not regard policemen as bogies to run away from, but as friends, indeed, if we can imagine big substantial policemen and their wives in fairy role, as fairy godfathers and godmothers, who supply all needy little ones not only with clothes and food, but cakes, oranges, toys, and chummy smiles.

There are no children anywhere, in any town, in any land, so well and lovingly looked after as the children of Blackpool. Not one ever goes hungry or ill-clad if the Chief Constable knows of it.

Blackpool has done many great things. Its Promenade is a triumph. Its entertainment palaces are wonders. Its municipal enterprise is a marvel. Its churches have had, and have, some mighty preachers. But, if to help the widow and the fatherless, to provide for poor little children, to try to raise the fallen, to guide erring ones into the right path, to regard the poor and unfortunate as neighbours and do one's duty by them, be the highest human activity and practical true religion, then the noble work of the Blackpool Chief Constable and his men is by no means the least of its achievements, but perhaps the greatest and the loveliest of all.

XXVI.

NOTABLE RESIDENTS.

Including its first Mayor, Blackpool has had thirty-three Mayors since it became a borough in 1876. Dr. Cocker was followed by Francis Parnell, of whose career some particulars have been given in a previous chapter, and he was succeeded by Thomas McNaughtan, M.D. There is a picture gallery of the Mayors in the Town Hall (opened in 1896), on Talbot Square, and there you may behold them, like an array of portraits in an ancestral hall, in all the glory of their robes and golden chains. Some of the Mayors held office two years, one being Ald. John Bickerstaffe, a name long and intimately associated with Blackpool's history. From humble fisher-folk, John Bickerstaffe rose to be first citizen. His career is like that of the Tower, which he originated, rising from the ground by the sea to a height of fame. Wm. Henry Broadhead, of Broadhead's Theatres, a gentleman whose geniality all Blackpool knows, also occupied the mayoral chair two years. Richard Holt was one of the best, kindest and fairest men who was ever Mayor of Blackpool (1915-1916), Ald. Jos. Heap (Mayor 1898-9), a first-rate financier and capable budget-maker, has long been our local Chancellor of the Exchequer. Councillor Wm. Geo. Bean (who developed the Pleasure Beach) is a man of ideas and an excellent and witty speaker.

Of living notabilities, other than the few mentioned (because of long service to the town or other special reason), I do not purpose saying anything, lest there be accusations of making invidious distinctions. The time is not yet come to decide their place in history, and I leave them to the chroniclers to come.

A few renowned persons from other towns have dwelt, or still reside, in the locality. In that compilation of celebrities entitled " Who's Who," for 1921-22,

I am told there are only four Blackpool men, Sir Cuthbert Grundy, Sir Albert Lindsay Parkinson, the Member of Parliament for the time being, and the author of this history (and other books). Of these four only one (Sir A. L. Parkinson) is a native of the town.

IN THE CEMETERY.

There are a few well-known names on the interesting memorial stones—and some beautiful examples of statuary—in Blackpool Cemetery (New Road). Just to the right as you enter, near the spot where lie several Masonic brethren, including Charles Whalley, one of Blackpool Cycling Club's pioneers, is a tombstone depicting three wickets, the centre stump falling, and the ball flying between the other two, with this inscription beneath, "Bowled at last." It is the grave of the famous cricketer, R. G. Barlow, born at Barrowbridge ("The Deserted Village"), near Bolton, and died at Blackpool, 1919 (aged 68). Near by is the grave of "Gipsy Sarah," of the one-time Romany Camp at South Shore, well known to tens of thousands of Blackpool's visitors. She died at the age of 92, over a score of years ago. Perhaps Old Sarah is the first gipsy to be buried in a cemetery and to have a tombstone. At the foot of the stone are the words "At Rest."

To the left of the cemetery gates, in the Nonconformist section (does it not seem ridiculous to carry these sectarian classifications to the burial ground?) is the grave of Laycock, the Lancashire poet, who died at Blackpool in 1893. The inscription says that he "passed to the higher life" (not died), and this verse follows:—

> "Thou art not idle—in thy higher sphere
> Thy spirit binds itself to loving tasks,
> And strength to perfect what is dreamed of here
> Is all the crown and glory that it asks."

Down the path near Laycock's grave is another outstanding memorial, remarkably and poetically impressive. There is sculptured an open volume, and on the left-hand page are the words "Lent Septem-

ber 28th, 1852,'' while on the opposite page are these words, '' Returned May 14th, 1907.'' It is the grave of Alfred Halstead, editor of the '' Blackpool Times.''

Near the church is the following tombstone:— '' William Hoyle, author of ' Hymns and Songs,' ' Daisy Ballads,' etc. Founder of the Lancashire and Cheshire Band of Hope Union. Died at South Shore, Nov. 14th, 1898, aged 61.'' On the pillared memorial are carved lines from William Hoyle's temperance poems.

Also near the church, on the further side, is a tombstone with the following singular inscription:—

" BENOIT DESQUESNES,
Born at Maroilles, France, 14th Nov., 1819.
Exiled by Napoleon III., 1851.
Died at Blackpool, 3rd June, 1891.
' The world is my country and to do good my religion.' "

A very noble motto for any man to take as a guiding rule for life. Only a good man could thus have crystallised his soul in such a great phrase. Yet the author of that line, Thomas Paine, was reviled as an Atheist, which he was not, for he was a Deist (what we should nowadays term a Unitarian). But because he was against theological tyranny and humbug he was slandered by men who called themselves Christians. He was a reformer and took a big part in forming the American Republic (United States). Benoit Desquesnes must have been an admirer of Paine's books, and a democrat, and I guess that's why he was driven out of his native land by Napoleon III., who was a trickster and brought France to the verge of ruin. Monsieur Desquesnes' only son is an esteemed Salford solicitor and alderman.

The Rev. William Thornber, Blackpool's first historian (who died Dec. 7th, 1885, in a private asylum) is buried in Blackpool Parish Churchyard.

The day I visited the Cemetery to copy out the above tombstone inscriptions, there was a strange and sweet incident. The Blackpool Ramble Club (150 of them) was looking through the place, after a visit to the Corporation Garden Nurseries, and one of their

leaders, jolly George Hylton, who like all true humorists has a deep sympathetic feeling, suggested singing for " Owd Sam Laycock an' all the others whose bodies lie here but whose souls are marchin' on," and reverently and harmoniously they sang " Windmill Land," and " The Spacious Firmament on High " (to the tune " Arizona ").

It is noteworthy that there is a separate Hebrew burial-ground near the cemetery.

A few personalities stand out conspicuous in the last two decades, notably Ald. John Grime, a fine vigorous character, breezy as Blackpool itself, a keen fighter, but a straight one always, ever promoting Blackpool's welfare, and in his day, because of his fine presence, his intellect, his humour, his cultured knowledge, wide reading, literary taste, and natural eloquence the best orator in the Town Council. He was rather excitable, soon moved to indignation, and many of us remember his little volcanic outbursts when he was irritated—I speak from personal experience, for I have had a few arguments with him myself—but withal he was a lovable man, and everybody liked him, for he was honest, open, generous, and chivalrous.

One of the oldest living residents to-day (1922) is Mr. John L. Smith (aged 88), of Lytham Road. His memory carries him back nearly a century. He is a living link with old Blackpool. He was a boy of three when Thornber published his " History of Blackpool " in 1837. He came to live here in 1854, when the wooden " Bridge of Peace " (to celebrate the finish of the Crimean War) was erected across the then fissure in the cliffs and roadway right to the beach at the bottom of Church Street to join the two strips of Promenade—one from the Clifton Hotel to near the Lane Ends, and the other from the Lane Ends to the Royal Hotel. Thornber performed the opening ceremony, at which Mr. Smith was present. Mr. Smith also knew Dr. Cocker, and remembers the First of May procession and sports (held annually in the Blackpool of that time), when the school-children used to assemble in front of the house of the doctor, who, on

one occasion remarked that " he felt like a father to them all, for he had brought most of them into the world."

In the eighteen-sixties, Mr. Smith recollects Edwin Waugh and Ben Brierley coming to give Lancashire readings in the " Crystal Palace," the assembly room at the bottom of Victoria Street (see photo facing page 164). Mr. Smith was for twenty-five years associated with the North Pier as a director, and took an active part in the organising of the first Blackpool Musical Festival.

Councillor James Pearson was a gentleman who for years advocated the widening of the Promenade, and at last found in Mr. Brodie a Borough Surveyor who had the same ideal. Mr. Pearson was one of the councillors who had travelled and got ideas. He was also the pioneer in Blackpool's great early electrical enterprise, bringing from Paris artistic notions with regard to electric standards. He wrought greatly to make Blackpool brilliant and beautiful.

Ald. James Ward was a " character," blunt and breezy, and one who " got on." The town did as well for him as he did for the town, as is also the case with other aldermen and councillors. He was particularly interested in making the Corporation Baths the model they are to-day, and would be proud of the splendid new open-air baths at South Shore, long the dream of Mr. W. J. Read, who had the pleasure of being at the opening at the beginning of the great Carnival week, July 9, 1923.

Of the flowers, trees, birds, beasts, etc., of Blackpool and district, I have little to say—I am no authority on these matters, so I leave them to the botanist, the naturalist, the conchologist, and other gentlemen of science. The bird most in evidence is, of course, the sea-gull, with its grace of wing, though sea-swallows, sand-pipers, and others may be seen along the coast, while sometimes a string of teal, or wild duck, may be seen flying low over the waters. Occasionally, porpoises are seen from the holiday steamers. The shore is interesting with a variety of

shells, and in places with pebbles with a story for the geologist.

I have seen pretty little lizards on the dunes, and I have heard of occasional snakes in the country lanes. Characteristic of our Windmill Land is the purple loose-strife, whose flowers make a beautiful display along the dykes and streams in July. The sea-pink abundantly decorates the banks of the Wyre at Skippool and Lune Bay (Pilling). Common in our countryside is the great willow-tree which adapts itself to the gales from the sea.

Visitors soon notice that the Fylde trees all lean and slope eastward owing to the prevalent westerly winds. Blackpool's great lack is foliage and greenery. In this respect the makers of the town, owing either to deficiency of artistic sense or a desire to pack the maximum of property in the minimum of space, failed in their duty as citizens. Their excuse was that trees would not grow in Blackpool, which is a libel. There have not only been ordinary trees, but orchards, close to the beach (as at South Shore, sixty or seventy years ago). The great willow-tree, which bends to the gales and conquers them by yielding, flourishes in the Fylde, and no doubt there are others as hardy and as adaptable. It should be our aim now not so much to make Blackpool big as to make it beautiful.

BLACKPOOL'S MANUFACTURE.

Blackpool is not noted for any manufactures. It could hardly be a holiday resort if it was. Parkinson's Works (builders and contractors) is the only industrial establishment of any considerable dimensions, and that is not so big as Blackpool's chief places of amusement. You see no unattractive array of big factory chimneys. Manchester is a cotton market, Liverpool a shipping centre, Wigan is associated with coal, Bradford with woollen goods, Staffordshire with pottery. But Blackpool has no fame of that sort. Yet all the same Blackpool is a renowned manufacturing place, in the highest

sense, turning out two great special products for millions. It manufactures Health and Jollity, without which life is weary and woeful. There are no minerals to dig and work here, but there are the finest sea sands in the British Isles for holidaying upon or nigh. Nature meant Blackpool to be a playground, and that's what Blackpool is. For tens of thousands, millions, of years, Nature was busy making the Windmill Land shore for the healthiest and happiest playground in the world. So Blackpool manufactures Health and Joy, joy for the heart, health for the body, charmingly compounded of sea and breeze, of sun and fresh air, of good fellowship and gaiety, of amusement and recreation, of dreamery and romance, and as a Joy Manufacturer Blackpool tops the bill. There may be more magnificent places, but there is none jollier. Blackpool as a town is not prepossessing, but if it is not handsome it is most lovable, with its memories, sweet or sad, but mostly sweet, for millions of folks. And as love makes the loved object beautiful, so Blackpool is bonny and dear to all who know its heart and soul, and love it as I do.

Blackpool has not as yet produced any distinguished men of intellect or inspiration in the higher realms of mental activity, no great author, no great poet—though William Baron, a living Lancashire writer and versifier of some distinction, was born at Blackpool—no great novelist, no great preacher, no great dramatist, no great artist, no great sculptor, nor indeed anybody of any particular power in any line, except in the ephemeral sphere of entertainment, though there may be men of some renown in various branches of art who have made it their abode at some time or other. It has produced men who have made money, if that sort of success is any help to humanity, but one cannot help noticing that most men who make money deteriorate in the process. A man may have plenty of money and yet be a gentleman, but it is a rare combination, while a man may have little money and yet be a true gentleman. Though I have known many men who were made worse by money, I never yet knew one who was made any better by it.

Yet Blackpool has done glorious and blessed things in its way—greater than writing songs or stories, far greater than making money—it has given millions the poetry and romance of which the best books are but shadows. the holiday jollity which is food for the heart and soul, and the good health that is the best riches in the world.

So now, grown on the sea-edge of the district that was peat-bog and forest a few thousand years ago, that was a wild and desolate region, with but few inhabitants, when the Romans came to Britain fifty years before Christ was born, that two hundred years ago was but a lonesome beach with a few fishermen's huts upon it, we have got our Blackpool of today, with its population of nearly a hundred thousand, out of which 41,000 are electors, men and women, with a Member of Parliament, a Town Council of fifty members, with its Streets, Cleansing, Markets, Building, Gas, Electricity, Tramways, Education, Library, Advertising and other Committees, its Borough Engineer, Surveyor, Treasurer, managers of departments, its public officials, its Poor-law Guardians, its magistrates—and even its "wreck-seekers," in place of the old coastguards, this work being now part of the police duties—its lifeboat, its fire brigade, its hospitals, its railways, its places of entertainment for the holiday crowds, its orchestras and bands and choral societies, its trade protection societies and trade unions, its political parties and clubs, its cricket, tennis, football, angling, bowling, swimming, and other clubs, its agricultural societies, its churches—fourteen Church of England, three Catholic, six Wesleyan, four Congregational, three Baptist, four United Methodist, four Primitive Methodist, three Unitarian, one New Church (Swedenborgian), one Christian Science Church, one Spiritual Church, and various others, including Plymouth Brethren, Free Christian Church, Christadelphian, Catholic Apostolic, Society of Friends (Quakers), Church of Christ, and the Salvation Army Citadel, and a Jewish Synagogue. Though we have not yet got Parsee or Mahometan or Buddhist temples—but there is a Theosophical

Society—one would not be surprised to find devotees of every creed under the sun in Blackpool, for because of its holiday character it is a cosmopolitan place, attracting all tribes and races. Many merchants and commercial men, of Manchester, Bolton, Blackburn, and other inland towns, reside at Blackpool, going to and from their business, morning and evening, in the special express " club " trains, in which one sees many faces typical of other nationalities than British.

A ROMANCE OF LAND VALUES.

Blackpool, like many other places, affords instances of that increase in land values and rents, due to increase of population and town development, which, seeing that the increased value is at least as much the result of the growth of the community as of any individual effort—often, figuratively, the original possessor has simply sat still while the value has grown up round him—raises questions as to how the increase should be equitably arranged and used and shared. Mr. Jas. Bowman, in his book entitled " Lytham Charities—the remarkable story of a small bequest," gives what he truly describes as the most "romantic and remarkable " event of this sort "on the Fylde seaboard." A certain small area of Blackpool, that two hundred years ago was sold for seven hundred pounds, is now estimated to be worth half a million. But two hundred years ago that land was only the fields of a little fishing village consisting of only a few huts. To-day it is the business centre of Blackpool. This " romance " of property values began in 1702 with a gift by Mr. Threlfall, a Lytham clerk, of £5 for " poor children's schooling." Other gentlemen added to this small nucleus, and in 1720 a great storm strangely helped it. The flooding sea damaged Lytham so extensively that a public subscription was started with the object of helping those who had suffered loss. But as it was found that it would be extremely difficult to apportion each person's respective claim, it was decided to put the fund to the Lytham

charity already mentioned. "Thus," as says Mr. Bowman, "the endowed schools of Lytham and St. Annes owe their existence mainly to a flood and a dispute"—really to the storms, one of nature, and one of human nature. But the quarrel was settled nobly in a spirit that decided to sacrifice individual advantage for the benefit of all and for the profit of posterity. With that money the land in Blackpool was bought—probably because it could be obtained freehold, as it could not in Lytham—the land on which now stand the streets round Blackpool Market (Market Street, Church Street, Birley Street, Lytham Street, Abingdon Street, etc.). Out of these investments have come the Lytham schools and the King Edward School, between Lytham and St. Annes. The question of whether the Lytham Charities were meant to be undenominational was taken before Parliament (1894), and the decision was "undenominational." Blackpool arguing that as it was the borough which "provided all the money," Blackpool and the whole Fylde "ought to share in some way in the proceeds of what would one day be a magnificent endowment," secured representation on the Lytham Charities for education. As the leases fall in, during this generation, the Lytham Charities will acquire an inheritance sufficient, as has been said, to build the finest university in the kingdom.

There are individual Blackpool families who have been as lucky as the "Lytham Charities"—unless there is no such thing as luck, but everything is fate and desert, governed by laws of which we are as yet mostly ignorant, "the divinity that," in Shakespeare's phrase, "shapes our ends." However, those who happened to be on the spot in the beginnings of Blackpool—especially when the tremendous development began in the eighteen-seventies, had nothing to do but take the opportunities as they came. They hadn't to create them. The crowds came surging to be catered for and amused—and these fortunate folks —most of them not of our sea-coast stock, but from outside places—had simply to take the money. The old primitive fisher-folk didn't take to business, but

plodded on in the breezy old life, while newcomers, strangers, got hold of the visitors' pockets.

Blackpool itself is thoroughly modern, alike in its genealogies and its architecture. There are no long-pedigreed families, no ancient buildings. Its aboriginal strain persists to some extent amongst the fishermen and boatmen and a few others, with a smack of the sea and coast folk-lore—such as the belief that a dying soul can only go out with the ebb of the tide—legends, traditions, and tales. But in the main Blackpool is the product of the nineteenth century, with none of the glamour of the far past about it.

You have to get outside the town for anything of antiquity. But to-day, even in the countryside, with its old halls, farms, and villages, the superstitions and ghost yarns and stories of fairy wells and similar strange and fascinating phenomena are but dim traditions, and the folk-lore is fast fading away. The plough-boy rides a motor-bike past the once-haunted hall, and the milkmaid attends whist drives or "jazz" dances in the village institute. Costumes and customs change, reading and writing replace ignorance and credulity, but the everlasting sexual urge operates through all generations, men and maids must mate, whether in the Stone Age or the Steam Age, or the Electric Era and Petrol Period, and so love abides, bearing humanity onward.

Relics of the past, too, as we have seen in previous chapters, remain for the pleasure of the student of history and the interest of the holiday-maker and the general public. The old churches, the old halls (many of which have become farms), the old winged towers for grinding corn in the charming Windmill Land, of which Blackpool is the metropolis, that have serenely looked on while the little fishing village has bustlingly developed into a big town, are still in the surrounding scene, telling of the old times.

PENNYSTONE ROCK.

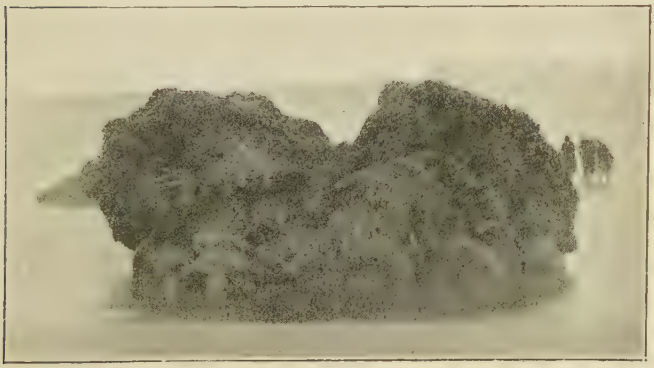
There are the rocks on the shore, notably the one called Pennystone, which has been mentioned before

(Chapter VIII.). One may accept the tradition that this rock stands near the site of a submerged village, as there are indications that the old road up from Bispham to the cliffs used to extend much farther seaward. But the story about the " ring " thereon, to which travellers tied their horses, lacks proof. Even so far back as 1837 Thornber says there was no ring there. In April, 1860, Edwin Waugh and Thornber visited the rock, but they say nothing about any ring. As they drank a bottle of whiskey while seated on Pennystone, one would not have been surprised if they had seen at least two rings, but they do not mention even one in Waugh's account of the expedition. In 1894, Mr. Arthur Laycock and I visited the rock, climbed on it and explored it, but found no ring. Again, last year (April, 1922), Mr. Harry Parr, the lifeboatman, Mr. J. H. Hampson, and myself, with a hundred members of the Blackpool Ramble Club as witnesses (not to mention a schoolboy, Frank Cobb, and a dog), went to the rock, at a very low ebb of the tide. As it is impossible to get to the rock without swimming, because of the deep pool that always surrounds it, even at very low water—a pool five or six yards wide at its narrowest—we went prepared with a long ladder, of which we made a bridge from the sands to the rock. We searched all over the tops and sides of the two big stones—the rock is now in two fragments, whatever it was originally—but found no trace of any ring, either of iron or any other metal. There were only strings of mussels, and anemones, and young conger eels in the water around the rock. We also found there Mr. J. M. Tomlinson, of Poulton, with his camera, taking advantage of the low tide to get a picture of the rock (photo faces this page). But there is some doubt as to this stone being the old original " Pennystone " Rock. In an article in the " Blackpool Times " (about 1900) Mr. Robert Bickerstaffe, who certainly knew the coast as well as anyone, said he remembered seeing Pennystone Rock forty to fifty years back (about 1850), but the tide did not now (about 1900) recede far enough to reveal it, and it had not been seen for years. He

(Photo by J. M. Tomlinson, Poulton.)

Pennystone Rock.

Now split in two, though probably still joined at the base (from some points of view it looks one piece), deep in the water and embedded in sand. The sea has scooped out the upper middle portion of the rock and made two blocks of the original huge stone. The three persons are the author (in long sea-boots for wading round the rock), his wife and youngest daughter.



Carlin Stone.

About 200 yards south-east of Pennystone and nearer the cliffs. It is often erroneously called the Pennystone.

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also said the same to me when I visited what I called Pennystone Rock—the one now known by that name —in 1894. However, he may have been mistaken, as the fishermen to-day say the present rock is the Pennystone of their fathers. A few hundred yards to the south-east of Pennystone Rock is another rock, often erroneously called the Pennystone. Its true name is "Carlin Stone."

TALES AND TRADITIONS.

Marton Mere, three miles out of Blackpool, the lake which in olden days had an outlet to the sea through the "black pool" from which our town gets its name, has already been described, with the tales and traditions thereof, as well as Staining Old Hall, and other places in the vicinity.

Of Mains Hall, on the River Wyre (near Shard Bridge), there are tales of priests' hiding holes and subterranean passages, as also of Hackensall Hall, on the other side of the river, near Knott End. When, during the last quarter of last century, structural alterations were being made at this hall, two skeletons were found walled up. There is a story that an obliging fairy, if a bowl of milk were left for it at night, used to do the house-work while the folks were in bed —a cheap and useful sort of domestic servant. It is said that Whitegate Lane, Blackpool, used to be haunted by the headless boggart of a farmer who was murdered when returning to Whinney Heys Farm from Preston. Thornber says his name was Gratrix, but gives few particulars and no date. The tombstone in Marton Churchyard, said to be over the grave of this man, bears another name entirely,—Singleton.

However, there is a true story of a recent ghost in this lane. A few years ago, in the dark, after midnight, a Blackpool policeman on duty in Whitegate Drive, perceived a figure in white coming along the black, deserted road. This Blackpool constable was of heroic stuff. His hair did not stand on end. He did not flee. He did not even whistle for assistance. Singlehanded and undaunted, he tackled the weird

adventure. He watched the apparition a few moments, then boldly went up to it and found that it was a lady walking in her sleep. The somnambulist, unconscious of her action, had got out of bed and crept out of the house.

If the superstitions and traditions are passing away, some of the rustic revels are yet alive in the old-fashioned villages of the Fylde and Over Wyre, and in the heart of Windmill Land, as at Treales and

The Mermaid of Marton Mere.
(See Page 60.)

Roseacre, one feels worlds away from Manchester and ages before steam, though even these rural festivals are nowadays touched with modernity. Steam-driven hobby-horses and motors are found at the village fairs. Yet they are still most delightful and interesting, with their Morris dances and folk-dances and maypole dances (for whose revival Mr. Cecil Sharp labours so lovingly), some of which, with their music, pretty and quaint, go back for hundreds of years (they are found in Playford's book of 1650, and in another of 1728).

XXVII.

THE BEAUTY ABOUT BLACKPOOL

Thus to-day we have our modern Blackpool surrounded by the Fylde and Over-Wyre villages, older than our great pleasure town, and once bigger, but now small by its side, scattered round its sentinel Tower, which is the flagstaff of Windmill Land, visible for fifty miles round. Blackpool is the Queen of Windmill Land, seated on Neptune's throne by the sea, metropolis of a holiday domain full of soothing pastoral beauty and romantic interest for the antiquarian, the botanist, the naturalist, the bird student, the follower of Izaak Walton, the photographic artist, and for the holiday-maker who has no hobby but to enjoy himself amid fairest pictures of land and water, mountain and valley, meadow and moorland, sea and river and lake. This Blackpool "Windmill Land" is almost untouched by railway—in the heart of it you are many miles from the nearest station, and have got out of the twentieth century of steam-engines into an eighteenth century Arcadia. In spring, April, May, June, it is at its loveliest, a land of orchard-blossom. But it is attractive in all seasons, even in winter, which is generally very mild, with but little snowfall. As a rule, when it snows, which is seldom, the flakes melt as they fall, and it is only about once in nine or ten years that the ground and house-tops get covered.

From grassy Preesall Hill, singular as the only hill on the seaward side of the comparatively great plain between the Fylde sea and the Pennine mountains—and by some antiquarians said to be an ancient British mound or barrow—there is the most beautiful view, landscape and seascape, in Lancashire, indeed one of the most beautiful views in England.

In other views, famous by pen and paint, such as the Wye Valley, the Thames at Richmond Hill, the scene from Knaresborough Castle, the Lune at Kirkby

Lonsdale, and the Cornish Coast, you may have mountains alone, sea alone, river alone, or a combination of two of them, but in the Preesall Hill view you have all these lovely elements together—river, bay and mountains beyond, and a sweet green level pastoral land, with windmills, bounded on the rising-sun side by wild moor and fell. In other grand scenes dominated by solitude, you have a feeling of barriers and imprisonment due to closely overhanging hills or the lofty sides of gorges, but on Preesall Hill, while you have a happy feeling of detachment from the world, at the same time you have a pleasant sense of sweet companionship with the villages whose churches you behold below, and the windmill grinding corn for daily bread, amid the restful, soothing green landscape—you feel that while you have risen to the divine the human still holds you by the hand, and you also have that wonderful feeling of freedom in immensity in which the soul can soar to infinity.

From the summit of Preesall Hill, which has stood for thousands of years before Blackpool began, when the Romans and Danes invaded the Fylde, looking inland we behold all our Lancashire Windmill Land from the Lune to the Ribble—the eye sweeps a circle of thirty or forty miles—we see the mountains of Lakeland over Morecambe Bay, an arm of which, called Lune Bay, lies almost at our feet; we see the Wyre mouth at Fleetwood and the great open sea, with its fishing-smacks and pleasure yachts and steamers off to the Isle of Man; while inland, eastward, are Bleasdale Fells, twenty miles away, and the masses of the Forest of Bowland, and the Yorkshire hills (the Pennine Chain,—there's a glimpse of Ingleborough). Right in front of us, three miles away across the fields, with the white highway winding through the greenery, is the spire of Pilling Church, and just beyond is the gleam of the bay wherein many vessels have come to disaster (the Fleetwood lifeboat has rescued many sailors on those Wyre and Lune banks), and the road covered at high tides, over the lone sands by the marshy wastes of Cockerham. Across the Lune Bay from Pilling you see Cockersand, with

its lighthouse, and Heysham, near Morecambe, and castled Lancaster with its conspicuous Park Observatory. In the other direction we see Preesall mill-sails whirling round, and the River Wyre, and Rosy Nook, and sunny Hambleton, and among the trees, miles up the river, are Windy Harbour, with its blackberry wood, and Rawcliffe Hall, with its romantic history and haunted Monk's Walk and tales of the 1715 Rebellion, and of its "Mad Squire," and Mains Hall where the Prince Regent came a-wooing the lovely Mistress Fitzherbert, and Singleton Church and windmill, where the Fylde witch, Meg Shelton, played her diabolic pranks, and many another hill and church and village of which one could yarn for a thousand nights and days,—and in the other direction, over the Wyre, Marton Mill, and Blackpool Tower, a dozen miles distant, and away in the south-eastern distance the chimneys of Proud Preston, while close on the right are Fleetwood's great grain elevator, a landmark visible for many miles, and the tall Pharos Lighthouse overlooking the Wyre entrance and the Irish Sea.

A CHARMING COUNTRYSIDE.

In previous chapters, frequent reference has been made to the historical and antiquarian interest of old halls, churches, and villages in the Fylde and Over-Wyre districts adjacent to Blackpool. The little quaint hamlets are set in sweet green surroundings. The scenery is pleasant and soothing, often picturesque. There are no mountains, the nearest moorland heights being over a score of miles east of Blackpool, but some parts of the River Wyre, from Poulton to Garstang, are charming, and some of the rural field-paths give the rambler delightful views of Lancashire's "Windmill Land"—green uplands, and woodlands, gleams of silver stream, and dyke, or lake (if you be near Marton Mere), blossoming hedgerows and flowery waysides, fields of growing wheat or golden waves of corn, according to the season, cosy farms, snug villages, church spires, windmill sails, and, in the distance, the masts in Fleetwood harbour,

with the Lake District mountains behind them, with, in sun-rising direction, the Bleasdale and Bowland Fells, and Longridge Fells, with sometimes the whale-back bulk of distant Pendle Hill in the vista.

Lady and gentleman visitors to Blackpool from London, Birmingham, Glasgow, and other places who have happened to have a stroll with the Blackpool Ramble Club (which is the biggest club of its kind in the world, having over 500 members, and sometimes over 300 on a ramble), have been enraptured with the walk over the upland, past the wood, from Singleton Station to Poulton, and declared that they never dreamt there were such fine scenic panoramas near Blackpool as may be seen on this walk. " Let nobody ever say to me again," said one London lady, " that there is no scenery near Blackpool. This is delightful."

Yet that spot is only four miles out of Blackpool.

While the lanes and byways of the Fylde are quiet in all seasons, the main roads to Blackpool are thick with motor traffic in the summer. Preston New Road has in August more vehicular traffic than any road in England, and is therefore probably the busiest road in Europe, if not the world.

RURAL WALKS AND RIDES.

Here is a list of some of the interesting spots that may easily be visited from Blackpool, some by tram, some by train, some by motor-coach, and others (and these are the choice bits, " far from the madding crowd ") only by cycle or shank's pony.

Some interesting historical particulars of most of these places have already been given, and fuller details will be found in the book " Windmill Land."

Bispham, three miles, old Norman porch at church (Fleetwood cars). There is also in the churchyard the spot where once was one of the " holy wells " so common in olden days, and some interesting tombstones.

Whinney Heys, two miles, up Church Street or tram from Talbot Square to No. 3 Hotel. Between No. 3 and No. 4 Hotels you pass what is left of Lay-

Marton Mere.
Three miles east of Blackpool Tower.

(Photo by J. Durbury.)

ton Hall (now a boarding establishment). On the opposite side to No. 4 you take the field-path (here is to be one of the entrances to Blackpool's great new park) towards Whinney Heys farm. From this upland there is a splendid view of Windmill Land—to the left, over the fields, Poulton Church, Thornton, and Fleetwood, in front Staining Windmill, with the Bleasdale Fells in the background, to the right Weeton Windmill and Little Marton Windmill (and in the valley on the right, but hidden by intervening upland, is Marton Mere).

Staining Windmill, three miles. Not far from Staining Windmill, on the road to Poulton, is a " fairy well " with reputed healing powers, especially for sore eyes.

Poulton, with its old stocks and market cross, three and three-quarter miles (train from Talbot Road Station, or walk up Newton Drive and across the fields).

Weeton, six miles—quaint old village, old inn, windmill. Two miles from Singleton Station.

Singleton, five miles. Train to Poulton and walk over fields, or train to Singleton (but Singleton Station is over a mile from the village). Windmill here since 1547. The witch Meg Shelton lived at Singleton.

Marton Mere, three miles. Tram to Oxford Hotel, then up Preston New Road, and take path on left, through a stile, just before coming to Clifton Arms, and across the fields. It is a bonny walk round the Mere. Or you can get to it up the lane opposite the Plough Inn, Staining.

Cartford Bridge (a toll bridge) on the Wyre, and Rawcliffe Hall, ten miles from Blackpool. Six miles from Poulton (nearest station).

Shard Bridge (River Wyre), a toll bridge—five miles from Blackpool, about one and a-half miles from Poulton Station.

Wardleys and Hambleton, over Shard Bridge, close by Staynall (Rosy Nook), eight miles.

Knott End and Preesall (eleven miles), Pilling (fifteen miles)—over the Wyre. First to Fleetwood by tram, then ferry-boat. On the sea-marshes, near

Fluke Hall, a mile out of Pilling, the gulls nest and breed.

Thornton, six miles (train from Talbot Road Station). Village with windmill.

Rossall School, six and a-half miles. Fleetwood tram.

Lytham, nine miles. Lytham cars from Blackpool.

St. Michael's-on-Wyre, thirteen miles. Pretty river scenery.

Cockerham (eighteen miles), and Cockersand Abbey (twenty-one miles). Difficult to get to these places except by motor or bicycle. Nearest station, Bay Horse, on the Preston-Lancaster Railway. Or you can get from Fleetwood by the Knott End Railway and there change for Bay Horse Station. From Bay Horse to Cockersand is a five miles walk.

Garstang, old market town (market day Thursday), sixteen miles from Blackpool.

Elswick, ten miles. Very old Nonconformist Church. A village of orchards and gardens.

Freckleton and Freckleton Naze on the Ribble (thirteen miles). Lovely walk on the Naze.

Guides House, Warton, on the Ribble, twelve miles. Old ferry inn. Houseboats here.

Clifton, thirteen miles. Church with old altar, windmill.

Woodplumpton, sixteen miles, old church, sundials, and a boulder stone said to mark the grave of Meg Shelton, the Fylde witch.

Rawcliffe Church, nine miles, over the Wyre, old three-decker pulpit.

Full particulars of walks and rides, with map and pictures, for twenty miles round Blackpool are given in my little book "Blackpool Walks and Rides" (sixpence).

Fifty years ago fourteen windmills could be counted from the tower of Poulton Church, and there were many more out of that range. Now, alas! they are gradually disappearing from the landscape, and to-day there are only the following round Blackpool:—

THE WINDMILLS.

Working windmills—Staining (three miles), Little Marton (three miles), Singleton (five miles), Weeton (six miles), Thornton (six miles), Treales (ten miles), Clifton (twelve miles), Preesall (eleven miles), Pilling (thirteen miles); a total of nine.

Ruined windmills—Lytham (nine miles), Wrea Green (eight miles), Kirkham (nine miles), Warton, oldest " peg mill " in Lancashire, now almost gone (ten miles), Cockerham (eighteen miles).

Not many, but still enough to justify the title of Lancashire's " Windmill Land," a quiet country of green and flowery lanes, full of rural beauty and a special soothing charm due to the sweet air and the arcadian serenities, where walks or rides create hearty appetites for the day and bring tranquil slumber at night.

HILL VIEWS FROM BLACKPOOL.

On November 28th, 1922, Mr. Lawrence H. Carr, M. Sc. Tech., M.I.E.E., son of Dr. Thomas Carr (himself one of our best local antiquarians), gave a lantern lecture, at the Public Library, on " Blackpool Hill Views," of which he had for years made a special study and observation. He showed some interesting and beautiful photographs of the mountain ranges and peaks to be seen from Blackpool Promenade and incidentally knocked on the head a few traditional illusions in regard to the hills visible from Blackpool. Generations of fishermen and residents have believed that Great Orme's Head, on the Welsh Coast, forty miles across the Blackpool water, could be seen from the Promenade, and it was local weather-lore that the sight of it always indicated approaching rain.

That the latter deduction is not correct I myself have proved from years of observation and notes. As often as not, the sight of the Welsh hills is followed by fine days. Mr. Carr's observations led him to the same conclusion. He also demonstrated, scientifically, that Great Orme's Head, owing to the curva-

ture of the earth, could not be seen from Blackpool Promenade, except on very rare occasions, with field-glasses, as a thin streak on the horizon, but never as a big hill, though its full, tall form could be seen from the top of the Tower (500 feet higher than the Promenade). The hill mistaken for Great Orme's Head was the top of Penmaenmawr.

Looking north-west from the Promenade, the chief hills seen, from left to right, are Black Combe (1,969 feet, with Barrow-in-Furness in front) thirty-two miles away, then Whit Fell, Leafallan, Hesk Fell, Haycock (2,619 feet), Steeple, Pillar (2,927 feet), Green Crag, Bank House Moor, Scafell (3,162 feet), Harter Fell, Scafell Pike (3,210 feet), Broad Crag, Ill Crag, Great End, Gunson Heights, Bow Fell (2,960 feet), Crinkle Crags, Dow Crag, Coniston Old Man (2,637 feet), Weatherlam (with the Sir John Barrow monument in front), all in the Lake District.

The inland eastward hills (I am indebted to Mr. Carr's original maps and drawings for these particulars) looking left to right, that is, north to south, from the top of Warbreck Hill (the road inland from the Gynn) are Grit Fell, Ward's Stone, Wolf Hole Crag (1,731 feet), twenty-three miles distant, Grizedale Fell (behind the village of Scorton)—amid these hills is Nickey Nook, fair picnic valley—Fell Top, Bleasdale Moors (1,560 feet) seventeen miles distant, Fair Snape (1,701 feet), Parlick Pike, Beacon Fell, and Longridge (1,148 feet), and Pendle Hill behind.

Looking south from Blackpool Promenade, from left to right, we see first the relatively flat parts of Flintshire. Then the conspicuous sugar-loaf hill, Moel Siabod, sixty-three miles distant, then the double-topped Creigau, Gleision, followed by Carnedd Llewellyn, the highest peak in this group (only eighty feet less than Snowdon, which, by the way, is not visible from Blackpool, being hidden by the nearer mountains), and Penmaenmawr, the most westerly Welsh hill visible from Blackpool Promenade.

From some of the uplands outside Blackpool you can see Darwen Moors and Jubilee Tower (twenty-six miles), Hoghton Tower (twenty-five miles), Rivington

Pike (thirty-two miles), and Parbold Hill (over the Ribble Estuary), thirty miles.

FORWARD.

Thus we have our Blackpool of to-day. This bit of earth swinging round the sun amid millions of stars in the Milky Way, this jolly town by the sea, looking at night, when lit up and illuminated, as seen from the steamers coming over the waters from the Isle of Man or North Wales, like a glittering string of pearls on the bosom and radiant jewels on the head of the Fylde, with all the soothing green charm and floral delight—especially in May-June, when it is a fragrant region of orchard blossom—of Windmill Land about it, our modern Blackpool, fruit and heritage of the past, that past with its striving and endeavour, its wisdom and follies, its magnificence and its mistakes, growing, improving, changing, evolving, through the generations.

We must always keep in mind the fact that Blackpool, nor any other town, is not just a place of bricks and mortar. There are dream-builders as well as brick-builders, and the dream-builders really lay the foundations for the brick-builders. Houses, however fine, buildings, however splendid, do not alone constitute a city, any more than the dress makes a human being. The spirit, the vision, that builds and shapes the place is the real town or city. The religious, mental, moral influences, heritage and fruit of generations, play their part in forming ideals and aims. What makes a city is its soul. The place that is doing its best to promote and maintain justice, goodwill, righteousness, to make life brighter and better for all its inhabitants, is the great city, and Blackpool, whose motto is "Progress"—though it sometimes forgets it—has in the main done well in that direction.

And the future of Blackpool? That lies in our hands, yours and mine, we citizens of Blackpool. Let our thought be not what we can get out of Blackpool but what we can put into it.

It is our business, our duty, to make Blackpool one of the best communities in the world, a grand place for its residents and for our friends the visitors, a town with a noble ideal of honest neighbourliness and good fellowship, aiming to make contented citizens, seeking to make our country, our Empire, the whole world, happier, healthier, holier, ever remembering that Blackpool has a great part to play in God's programme of the Divine Drama of evolution, and must always go forward under its banner with the inspiriting motto of "Progress."

ADDITIONS AND CORRECTIONS.

This follows stage-coaching items on page 128 :—

Mr. Charles Clegg, in a series of antiquarian articles in the "Halifax Courier," shows that Yorkshire, though handicapped by greater distance, was not long after Lancashire (Manchester) in running coaches to Blackpool. Samuel Riley, in July, 1801, in the "Halifax Journal" advertises a covered conveyance to run every Monday morning at 6 a.m., from Upper George Inn, Halifax, by way of Bacup and Blackburn (putting up here for the night), reaching Blackpool at 8 o'clock on Tuesday evening, fare 15/-. Also a reward is offered to anybody who will give information as to persons circulating a scandalous report that the coach had been overturned and two passengers killed (such accidents were frequent in the old coaching days). In 1803, Riley became tenant of (the late) Thomas Elston's inn at Blackpool (see picture on page 197), and still ran the conveyance between Halifax and Blackpool, advertising trips for sea-bathing.

Chapter XIV., page 127.—Maps of the Fylde, but, of course, with no Blackpool on, were published in 1610 (by John Speed) and 1622 (E. Bowen).

Page 67.—Sir Thomas Moore should be "More."

Members of Parliament (see page 253).—1923 (Dec. 6th): Major Meyler (Liberal), 22,264 votes, defeated Admiral Stanley (Conservative), 19,192 votes; majority, 3,072. First Liberal M.P. ever returned for Blackpool.

Literary Society (Dr. J. Johnston, President), (see page 279).—1923 (Nov. 26th), John Masefield, poet and novelist, gave lecture to audience of over two hundred on Poetry.

Illustrations.—Uncle Tom's Cabin should read "facing page 72" instead of 228.

Note.—If any reader should discover errors, the Author will be glad to have the corrections.

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